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lbos fail Jewish test

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel's Supreme Court has rejected an appeal to consider the Ibo tribe of Nigeria as Jews, which would have opened the door for the community of two million to emigrate. James Edwards Oniolo from the West African state claimed that the Ibos were descendants of the lost tribe of Ephraim, one of the 10 tribes scattered throughout the world after the fall of the first temple in Jerusalem in the 6th century B.C. Oniolo found several parallels between the Ibo religion and Judaism, noting monotheism, male circumcision and dietary laws. However the court ruled against the Ibo on Thursday and in However the court ruled against the Ibo on Thursday and in support of the interior ministry which refused to grant Oniolo the right of return to Israel as a Jew. Oniolo arrived in Israel six years ago and married a Jewish woman which gives him the right to live in Israel. Israel automatically grants citizenship and a host of benefits to any Jew and close relatives who emigrate to the state—some 70,000 immigrants have arrived this year, most from the former Soviet Union.



Sahara referendum proposed for October

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — A U.N.-sponsored referendum on independence for Western Sahara from Morocco could take place in October 1995. Secretary General Bourros Ghali said Friday. In a report to members of the Security Council, Dr. Ghali laid out a timetable for the plebiscite to take place following meetings last month with Moroccan officials and members of the Polisario Front, a group of Western Saharan guerrillas. The United Nations has been trying to organise a referendum for years to settle the 19-year territorial dispute over the former Spanish colony of Western Sahara. "Despite the difficulties encountered and the delays experienced over the past few months, the political will exists to move the process forward." Dr. Ghali said. He proposed that by March, all voters eligible to participate in the referendum be identified to allow for a series of measures contained in a U.N. settlement plan to be implemented as of June 1. These include a separation of the combatants that were to be confined to designated locations, an exchange of prisoners, amnesties for political prisoners and the release of detainees.

Volume 19 Number 5795

AMMAN SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1994, RAJAB 14,

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

Majali: Jordan will continue custodianship over Jerusalem

'OIC resolutions did not deny Jordan's role'

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

The prime minister, Dr. Abdul Salam Majali, announced yesterday that Jordan would continue its trusteeship of Jerusalem's holy shrines as there was nothing in the Organisation of Islamic Conference's resolution concerning the city to exclude this role.

Speaking at a press conference several hours after his return from Casablanca Dr. Majali said that, in anyway the summit conference "was not a court of law that could decide to whom the trusteeship goes." The pertinent resolutions, the prime minister stressed, said nothing for Jordan's guardianship of the shrines, it is true.

"At the same time it said nothing against our trus-teeship," he added, explaining that the reservation Jordan expressed over the resolution stemmed from the fact that the summit did not recognise Jordan's special tie to the holy places.

Dr. Majali said that the

Muslim countries are to meet in January to try to resolve the dispute over the holy city. Dr. Majali said the meeting of the Al Quds Committee, chaired by King Hassan II of Morocco would also include

Egypt.
"It will meet in mid-January to debate the issue of Jerusalem," he said, adding the discussions would "look at the problem of the guardianship of the city's holy aluslim sites and issues connected to the holy city.

Dr. Majali reiterated His Majesty King Hussein's pledge at the summit that Jordan would not give up its trusteeship of the shrines at the moment since that would open the way for Israel to assume responsibility for yesterday (Petra photo)

For this reason, Jordan registered its reservation, but not objection, over the Casablanca resolutions concerning the holy city, Dr. Majali said.

Jordan's care for the holy shrines in Jerusalem had never been a problem to any one or raised by any party, he said reiterating that the trusteeship would only last until the Palestinians have completed their negotiations for the final restoration of their sovereignty over the Arab

It seemed that Jordan's position regarding Jerusalem had not been clear enough for some parties who had thought that Jordan intended to impose its control over Jerusalem and the holy places and to deprive the Palestinian people of their own lawful and legitimate rights, the

prime minister noted. Dr. Majali said that some

parties had thought that "we were suggesting something new but the reality is that there is nothing new in this whole issue since Jordan had been caring for the holy places even before the (1967) occupation and afterwards and after the 1988 severance of the legal and administrative ties with the West

Dr. Majali said that everyone is waiting for the Palestimians to enter into final status negotiations with Israel over the issue of Jerusalem to regain their rights and sovereignty over the city. Dr. Majali noted that no

one at the summit had denied Jordan the right of trusteeship over the holy places nor had any party made any remarks against this trus-teeship. What was frustrating, he said, was the fact that the resolution was void of any mention of Jordan's role.

In his address to the summit Wednesday King Hussein said that as a Hashemite and Jordanian "I would like to stress that the shrines are a trust in our hands as we have rescued them with the blood of our sons in the 1948 war and we have constructed them three times on behalf of the Islamic nation.'

Asked on whether there was neglect or shortcomings on the part of the government in fully explaining Jordan's stand vis-a-vis Jerusalem, Dr. Majali said that there was no negligence in this matter, as we have explained our position clearly on many occasions.

The PLO, supported by Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Egypt, wanted the OIC to rame an Islamic committee

to look after the holy shrines until the Palestinian Authority recovers the area in negotiations with Israel, an Arab official at the summit told

AFP requesting anonymity. The PLO fears that the recognition many undermine its claim to have east Jerusalem as the capital of a future state — an issue to be settled in a later phase of negotiations with Israel.

But Dr. Majali sought Friday to defuse the row saying only that there were "divergences" over Jerusalem. "Jordan is not opposed to

the resolution on Jerusalem but we think that our role has been neglected while that of Saudi Arabia had been recognised.

"Jordan has no desire for hegemony over this city. We are the trustees until Palestinian autonomy is extended and our role is not political, he added.

The Al-Qods committee, set up by the OIC in May 1979 after the signing of the Egypt-Israel peace treaty, is composed of 15 foreign ministers and was entrusted with drawing up a programme "to liberate Jerusalem" after Israel invaded the Arab eastern sector in 1967.

The prime minister said that he was satisfied with contacts with other Arab states at the summit and that Jordan had hoped that the occasion would be a good opportunity for reconcilia-

Dr. Majali said that King Hussein had cordial meetings with a number of heads of delegations including PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and the Kuwaiti foreign minister.

The Prime Minister, for his part, met Sheikh Zayed Al Nhian, and Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Fais-

(Continued on page 12)

weapons programmes of re-

search where the commission

said it faced its greatest diffi-

culties in obtaining past in-

"While Iraq maintains that

the programme was in the

early research stages and

would be defensively

oriented, the indications all

point to an offensive prog-

U.N. sources said inspectors

had discovered small quanti-

ties of research materials or

"growth media" for cholera,

tuberculosis and the plague,

which had not been declared

previously. The materials

have been destroyed, with

About a week ago, the

ramme," Mr. Ekeus said.

formation.

The prime minister, Dr. Abdul Salam Majali at the press conference at the Prime Ministry Ekeus: Iraq still hiding crucial data

Hamas, PNA reconciliation talks stall GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AFP) — Joint talks between

the Palestinian Authority and the opposition Hamas group set up to defuse tension after clashes in Gaza left 13 dead have stalled, a Hamas leader

said Friday. "We announce that the committee has reached a dead-end," said Mahmond Zahhar.

CAIRO (Agencies) - Police

have arrested a leader of an

armed Muslim militant group

wanted for planning attacks

on senior officials from the

interior ministry, the daily Al

old civil servant, was arrested

in Samta in the southern

Egyptian Bani-Seweif pro-

vince 125 kilometres south of

Other militants from the

The last attack blamed on

the Jihad was in February

when the main witness in the

trial into the attempted assas-

sination of Prime Minister

Atef Sedki was killed north

Egyptian authorities have

said they have "wiped out"

the Jihad and "foiled all its

secution referred 20 Muslim

militants to court on charges

of belonging to a "terrorist"

group bent on destabilising

Jihad group were also

arrested, the paper added.

Amer Ibrahim, a 35-year-

Ahram said Friday.

Cairo.

of Cairo.

attacks."

The committee was set up by the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas and the Palestinian Authority earlier in December after Hamas supporters and Palestinian police clashed in the autonomous Strip in November.

One of the committee's aims was to form a factfinding commission to inon the (Palestinian) govern-ment," Mr. Zahhar said at a creation of Hamas.

and (Ahmed Nimr) Darwish to continue their active

whered they learned how to shoot and make bombs. Three of the suspects are The Jihad is a revival of the

The sources said the mili

tants belonged to the Jihad

(holy war) group which is

seeking to topple the regime and establish an Islamic state

in Egypt by carrying out

attacks against senior officials

and by trying to infiltrate the

The suspects, arrested

three months ago, were all from the Ismailia province,

east of Cairo. They were

running a training camp in a

desert area in Ismailia

army ranks.

still on the run, they said. group that assassinated President Anwar Sadat during a

military parade in 1981.

It has claimed responsibility for many assassination attacks against high-ranking ters, including the interior, information and prime minister in 1993. The ministers

which endangered the lives of people," the prosecution

in which 200 people were also wounded. "We place the responsibility for the committee's failure

rally held to celebrate the seventh anniversary of the

KING RETURNS: His Majesty King Hussein Conference (OIC's) summit which concluded

Friday returned home after heading the Jorda- in Casablanca Thursday (Petra photo) nian delegation to the Organisation of Islamic

Jihad leader arrested in Egypt

sources said Friday.

his disobedience.

group.

the country and overthrowing

the government, prosecution

statement the young men be-

longed to "a secretive and

illegal organisation" aiming

at suspending constitutional

laws, damaging the country's

security, ousting the govern-

ment, charging the ruler with

infidelity and preaching for

of possessing illegal arms,

forging identification papers.

robbing jewellery and elec-tronical shops and selling

their gains to finance their

They would be tried in a

high state emergency court

with the exception of two

who were referred to a nor-

mal court becuase they were

"Terror and violence were

plementing their objectives

under the age of 17.

ie tools used

The men were also accused

The prosecution said in a

A statement issued later by the group said the committee was not dissolved, but had 'slowed down" its work.

"We still respect the agreement," it said, referring to an agreement worked out with the Palestinian Authority which included a ban on arms and abusive language at ral-

"We call on (Ahmed) Tibi

lem," the statement said, Messrs. Tibi and Darwish are Israeli-Arabs on the committee who have acted as mediators.

Another Hamas leader. Imad Faluji, said the authority had suddenly announced its representatives who came. only from the PLO leader Yasser Arafat's main Fateh faction.

"This means the authority does not want to talk with us," Mr. Faluji said, accusing the self-rule authority of deliberately delaying setting up the fact-finding body.

"We have no problem with Fatch, our conflict is with the Palestinian Authority," he : said, adding the committee last met about a week ago.

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, months to live.

told me that, and I don't Mr. Mitterrand, who is suffering from prostate cancer.

speaking at a news conference at the close of a daylong Franco-Italian summit. Philosopher Jean Guitton, 93, had said Friday that Mr. Mitterrand confided to him last month that doctors reck-

Mr. Mitterrand, who is due to step down as president in May after 14 years as head of state, visited him at his Paris home Nov. 17 to discuss the afterlife, Mr. Guitton said in an interview with RMC

In an interview with RMC Radio, Mr. Guitton quoted Mr. Mitterrand as telling him: "I have a fatal illness, and the doctors looking after me, in particular my main doctor, say that I cannot live more than six months."

Socialist Mitterrand, 78, has said that he wants to serve out his term despite painful treatment for cancer, but has not publicly disclosed when doctors fear he might die.

The Elysee presidential palace had no comment

on Mr. Guitton's remarks. Mr. Mitterrand has slimmed down his public appearancess and has appeared increasingly gaunt after a second operation, during the summer,

for prostate cancer. On Friday, he met Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi in the southern French town of Aix-en-Provence.

Conservative French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur is the favourite to win the April 23-May 7 presidential election after



Francois Mitterrand Socialist European Commission President Jacques Delors withdrew from the contest last Sunday.

Mr. Guitton, a member of the French Academy, is a widely respected philosopher of fervent Roman

Catholic faith. He said he told Mr. Mitterrand there were two types of death- of the soldier and of the general.

Even in combat, the soldier died with friends on all "The general is completely alone. You have the responsibility of the gener-

France. You have given a . marvellous example to all." he said.

Arafat proposes gradual Israeli troop withdrawal

(Agencies) - PLO leader Yasser Arafat has proposed a gradual withdrawal of Israeli troops from the West Bank beginning in cities with no Jewish settlers, Israeli and Palestinian officials said on

The officials, who did not at to be named, said he die the proposal during alks this week with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in Stockholm. Mr. Peres said Israel would con-

sider the matter. The proposal calls for Israel to withdraw initially from Jenin and Bethlehem. West Bank cities separated

from Israeli settlements. The withdrawal would be followed by negotiations for a redeployment throughout the West Bank and Palestinian

More than 100,000 Jewish settlers live among two million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In some cases, settlers live in or

next to Arab towns. As part of the Israeli-PLO interim agreement, Israel handed over to Palestinian control most of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho last May.

Islamic militants, opposed to the self-rule agreement, have launched a series of deadly attacks against Israelis.

Israelis and Palestinians negotiating the next stage of the agreement in Cairo this wisk said some progress was reached but more time was needed to clinch a deal.

Meanwhile senior PLO

members are urging Mr. Ara-

fat to refuse to hold Palesti-

nian elections unless Israel withdraws its troops from cities and towns on the West

Mr. Arafat heard the appeal by members of the PLO's Executive Council, which is still based in Tunisia, during a Thursday night stopover on his way back to Gaza from the Islamic summit in Casablanca, Morocco.

PLO negotiators meeting with Israelis in Cairo for the past two weeks have categorically rejected elections amid any sign of Israeli occupa-

However, some PLO officials fear Mr. Arafat might give in to pressure from Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

"It seems that Rabin is again trying to squeeze Abu Ammar (Arafat) and we are trying to help him," Sakhar Habash, a member of the PLO's central committee, said in a telephone interview

with AP. The PLO's central committee is split over the autonomy accord, with PLO political chief Farouk Kaddoumi leading the opposition flank that believes it falls short of their goal of Palestinian statehood. Mr. Habash said the com-

mittee's recommendation to Mr. Arafat came after he presented them with the latest Israeli proposal on Palestinian elections. No details have been given on the

However, the Jerusalem Post reported Thursday that Israel no longer opposed the participation of "most" members of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, which is against the peace process.

UNITED NATIONS (R) confronted with evidence by But the main problem was the commission," the report in the area of biological

Iraq is still hiding information on its past weapons programmes by failing to declare equipment and materials until confronted with evidence to the contrary, says a U.N. report obtained Friday.

The report by Rolf Ekens, chairman of the U.N. special commission in charge of Iraqi disarmament, is a half-year summary of its work and is due to be presented to the Security Council Monday.

While Iraq was praised for cooperating in a crucial longterm monitoring programme. the report said missing data. particularly on biological weapons, was pervasive. "In general, in relation to

lack of transparency, disclos-

ing information only when

ROME (R) — Italian Prime

Minister Silvio Berlusconi,

whose seven-month-old

coalition could be toppled by

week, Friday branded moves

Mr. Berlusconi attacked

what he said was an attempt

to cheat the electorate as

Umberto Bossi, leader of the

Northern League Coalition

Party, claimed to have the

support in parliament to

bring down the government

and form a new ruling

die at the expense of the

electors and on the back of

the country," Mr. Berlusconi

told Panorama Magazine

when asked about league

moves to form an alliance

with leftist and centrist

Berlusconi will seek what

amounts to a vote of confi-

dence in his five-party coali-

Billionaire businessman

opposition parties.

"It's a big swindle, a swin-

alliance.

to unseat him a swindle.

the past programmes, Iraq has not volunteered information and has shown a marked

mission said, was a highprecision tracking radar which Iraq said had not been used for the type of ballistic missiles banned by the Security Council. After 14 months of talks

"In many instances, new

information obtained by the

commission contradicted the

A prime example, the com-

accounts given by Iraq."

and investigations, the commission said it now had "overwhelming evidence" the radar could be used for

forbidden missile programmes, despite more than a year of denials from Iraq. The mobile radar station had been imported from China years ago, sources at the U.N. said.

liament next Wednesday. If

the prime minister loses, he

samples sent to various laboratories, including one in the United States, for analysis. Berlusconi calls opponents swindlers tion when he addresses par-

would be duty-bound to resa parliamentary vote next Mr. Bossi's Federalist League is one of the three main coalition partners. But its outspoken leader repeated in an interview published in several newspapers Friday that he thought Mr. Berlusconi had reached the end of

the line. "There are two ways out of this political situation. Either we have a government without Berlusconi or there are fresh elections," Mr. Bossi

"But there won't be elections because there is already a majority opposed to Berlusconi in the chamber of de-puties (lower house)," added Mr. Bossi, who said he had the backing of 325 members of the 630-seat chamber.

Mr. Bossi claimed to have

the support of the Democra-

tion groups - plus a sprinkling of minor parties to form a new broad government to complete institutional re-

Berlusconi's Forza Italia Party in a new alliance but made t clear he wanted to be rid of the media magnate.
"If he (Berlusconi) goes

possible revolt from over 50

tic Party of the Left (PDS) and the Centrist Popular Party - two of the main opposi-

The league leader said he would be prepared to work with the liberal wing of Mr.

back to being a businessman, it'll help us find a painless solution to the crisis," Mr. But Mr. Bossi faces a

of the league's members of parliament who are opposed to a deal with the former communist PDS. The league's interior minister Roberto Maroni has said he will not join an alternative government.

vestigate the November clash efforts to solve this prob-Mitterrand denies he has 'six months to live' the afterlife.

France (R) — French President Francois Mitterrand denied Friday telling a philo-sopher that his doctors had informed him he had just six

'My doctors have never expect such a quick ending," told reporters. Mr. Mitterrand, 78, was

oned he had no more than six months to live.

radio. Jean Guitton, 93, said

Mr. Mitterrand, due to step down as president in May after 14 years in power. visited him at his Paris home on Nov. 17 to discuss

Islamic leaders differ on host of issues

CASABLANCA, Morocco (Agencies) — Islamic leaders Thursday urged military aid for Bosnia's empattled Muslims and vowed to combat religious fanaticism which has destabilised their nations.

But appeals for greater Muslim unity were undercut by rifts among Arab participants that remained unresolved at the close of a threeday summit of the 52member Organisation of the Islamic Conference.

King Hussein, the Arab World's longest-reigning leader, quit the summit Wednesday, apparently because of a feud with the Palestinians who accuse Jordan of making deals with Israel that could undercut their claim to sovereignty over Jerusalem.

One of the summit's goals was to end feuds that have plagued the Arab World since Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, polarising the region into pro- and anti-Iraqi camps.

The host Moroccan government lamented the failure of the reconciliation effort. It regretted that "one OIC member was unhappy," alluding to King Hussein's early departure and Jordan's reservations over the Jerusalem resolution (see page 2).

"Despite all the goodwill efforts, we regrettably found that the Gulf war has left an open wound which has to be healed," said Morocco's King Hassan II.

"It is time to let bygones be bygones; it is time for forgiveness," he said of the failure to bring the Iraqis together with Kuwaiti and Saudi Arabian delegations.

Despite the disputes, participants agreed on a 182article communique on issues ranging from terrorism in the Islamic World to technology and culture. They agreed to hold the next Islamic summit in Tehran, Iran, in December

A separate, six-page document — the Casablanca Declaration - complained about "a ferocious campaign to tarnish Islam," denounced extremism and religious fanaticism" and called for an organised media effort to have made Islam synonymous with violence.

It condemned terrorism as "a blatant disgrace to Islamic teachings and a violation of our values, culture and heritage." It pledged "sincere cooperation" with international anti-terrorism efforts. without "infringing on the legitimate right of national

resistance to occupation." The plight of Bosnian Muslim was a unifying issue for the leaders who came from far-flung countries in Europe, Asia and Africa.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic attended as an observer, and his government received pledges of between \$300,000 to \$5 million from each Islamic state.

The Bosnia resolution went beyond the expected call to lift the arms embargo that favours the betterequipped Bosnian Serbs.
The Islamic states said they

would cooperate with any U.N. members "who exhibit a willingness on their own initiative to provide Bosnia with the means for self de-

They renewed a call to reinforce U.N. peacekeepers with Muslim troops, a suggestion rejected by Western countries which fear it could allow fundamentalist countries like Iran to gain a foothold in Europe.

The Islamic leaders called for streamilining procedures to allow "immediate military support," including air strikes by NATO, to protect peacekeepers and civilians against Serb attacks.

They also sought cooperation between their "contact group" on Bosnia and the contact group of the United States, Russia, France, Britain and Germany.

The resolutions on the Middle East made no mention of the boycott of Israel, which Islamic states had pledged to honour until the settlement of the conflict.

The document praised progress in Arab-Israeli peace talks. But it did not mention the Palestinian selfrule accord or the Jordan-Israel peace treaty, apparently to avoid a veto from Syria which had denounced the separate deals.

Iraq, angered over a resolution entitled "Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, won a minor victory with the deletion of a sentence on implementing U.N. Security Council resolutions regarding the elimination of weapons of mass destruction.

The resolution still called for Iraq to comply with U.N. resolutions and refrain from menacing its neighbours.

Jordan failed to gain a mention in the final document on Jordan's role in overseeing Muslim holy sites in Arab East Jerusalem.

Palestinians objected out of fear it would weaken their claim to sovereignty over that sector of the city holy to Christians, Muslims and

The 184-point summit resolution also dealt with the conflicts in Afghanistan. Kashmir and Somalia as well as the international embargo on Libya.

A declaration on Kashmir. where Muslim separatists are in rebellion against Indian rule, called for a peaceful and political solution based on U.N. resolutions. It also urged dialogue between India and Pakistan.

Abdul Qayvum Khan, prime minister of the Pakistani sector of Kashmir, welcomed the resolution and thanked the Indian government for allowing two separatist leaders from the Indianheld two-thirds of Kashmir to attend the Casabianca sum-

On Afghanistan, the summit document expressed deep concern "over the fratricidal conflict" and urged the Afghan leadership to spare no effort to bring hostilities to an immediate end.

An Afghan delegate said the warring Afghan factions failed to agree a ceasefire during OIC-sponsored talks in Tehran before the summit. "More talks are needed," he

The summit resolutions were adopted unanimously with only Jordan and Iraq expressing reservations.

Sudan: OIC summit a failure

KHARTOUM (AFP) - Sudan leader General Omer Hassan Ahmad Al Beshir Friday slammed the justconcluded Organisation of the Islamic Conference in Casablanca as a failure.

The summit has "failed" to achieve fraternity among Arab states whose differences flared once again during the meetings of the OIC, Gen. Beshir said in a statement on his

In another development, Beshir said Nigeria would play a role in reactivating efforts to reach peace in southern

Gen. Beshir who met with Nigeria's head of state, General Sani Abacha, told reporters that the Nigerian leaders have expressed readiness to reactivate the peace efforts in the Sudan.

Nigeria has previously hosted two rounds of peace talks between the Sudanese government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

But after Sani Abacha took over from General Ibrahim Babangida, the peace efforts moved to Kenya where President Daniel Arap Moi is leading a four-member committee that includes the heads of state of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda.

The Organisation of the Islamic Conference summit regrouped 51 countries.



TURKEY'S WAR GAMES: A Turkish soldier in against fighters of the outlawed Kurdish snow-camouflage jumps out of an Army heli- Workers' Party (PKK). The military action in copter in the Turkish-Iranian border region temperatures of some minus 40 degrees Celsius near Mount Ararat Thursday, as some 30,000 was aimed at cutting PKK forces from escape Turkish troops launched a military action routes to nearby Iranian territory (AFP photo)

Illiteracy rising in Iraq as U.N. sanctions bite

BAGHDAD (AFP) Poverty exacerbated by U.N. sanctions is driving many children in Iraq to quit school and seek work, pushing up the rate of illiteracy, officials say here.

"Illiteracy is threatening society again," warned the weekly Aleph Ba, calling for a serious public debate on the problem.

The government spent vast amounts of money on eradicating illiteracy from 1978 to 1987, targetting some 2.25 million people.

But the U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait seriously harmed the education ministry's programmes, a ministry official said.

The Iraqi press has given extensive coverage to reports of teenagers filling the streets, selling newspapers, cigarettes and sweets.

Nearly nine per cent of girls and six per cent of boys

in primary and intermediate schools stopped attending class in the 1993-1994 academic year. The ministry forecasts a higher rate in the current year.

Around five million children are enrolled in schools. making up nearly one-third of Iraq's 18 million inhabitants.

The situation is aggravated by the fact that primary education is compulsory in Iraq and parents who fail to send their children to school risk penalties going as far as imprisonment.

The interruption of studies, mainly in intermediate schools, is spreading continuously," Education Minister Hikmat Al Bazza told

"The phenomenon will worsen this year and include teachers, who have started leaving the profession in search of other jobs."

Civic organisations such as the General Union of Itagi

the situation by organising special courses Union official Fadila

Women are trying to improve

Hmaidi told the newspaper Al Qadissiya that the organisation had enrolled more than 11,000 girls aged 10 and above who had been forced to leave school.

Last month Iraq recognised Kuwait's sovereignty and borders — a key condi-tion for the lifting of sanc-

But the U.N. Security Council renewed sanctions on Nov. 14.

Kuwait, backed by the United States and Britain, demands full Iraqi compliance with all U.N. resolutions relating to the August 1990-February 1991 Gulf crisis before any easing of the sanc-

The sanctions have sent inflation spiralling in Iraq and caused chronic shortages of food and medicines.

Emir of Bahrain pardons prisoners which complaints have sparked scattered protests in

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP) - Bahrain's emir marked the country's 33rd anniversary of independence Friday by pardoning a number of prisoners and saying his administration would increase its efforts to bolster the economy and create work opportunities.

Training Bahrainis for jobs and further developing the economy are the country's key aims, Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa said in the address broadcast on radio and television. His remarks were front-page headlines in

local newspapers. He highlighted achieve-

recent days. ments the former British colony had made since gaining independence in 1971, transforming itself from an archipelago of fishing and pearl diving islands into an offshore banking, tourism and services centre for the oil-rich Gulf.

The independence day celebrations came against a backdrop of increasing unrest over rising unemployment in the emirate and allegations of arbitrary arrests, both of

Official statistics say 15,000 of the emirate's 250,000 people are without employment while unofficial figures claim the figure is twice as high. Some 500,000 people live in the Gulf state, but half of them are expatriates, mainly Indians, Pakistanis and Filipi-

Although there are no official census figures, Shiites are believed to make up a majority of Bahrain's population

Queen urges U.N. to study, implement development report

HER MAJESTY Queen Noor last week met in New York with United Nations Secretary General Boutros Ghali to discuss recent and upcoming global conferences to promote world development, as well as the necessity to enhance Arab participation at international meet-

During a ceremony attended by Ismat Kittani. Nitin Desai, under-secretarygeneral for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, Shaukat Fareed, director of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs at the U.N., Garry Jacobs and Robert MacFarlane. Queen Noor presented, on behalf of the International Commission of Peace and Food, the findings and recommendations of the commission's report, "Uncommon Opportunities: An Agenda for Peace and Equitable Development.

The Queen, a member of the ICPF since 1992, made a formal request that the recommendations of the report be examined and considered by U.N. agencies and committees.

The Queen briefed the U.N. secretary general on the report's theoretical framework, which presents an integrated and comprehensive approach to development, synthesising political, economic, social, military, environmental and human issues, and focuses on the human being as the most valuable resource for development.

The ICPF report calls for the strengthening of the U.N. peace-keeping and peace-making roles and the upgrading of the prerogative and diplomatic status of the secretary general; and the democratisation of the United Nations system and its member states, citing strong evidence that democratic forms of government are essential for lasting peace and social stability, human rights protection, economic de velopment and human welfare.

The report also argues that hunger is not the result of inadequate food production capacities, and regards agriculture as a stage of development and an engine for industrialisation and economic growth.

Oueen Noor said that the recommendations of the ICPF were especially relevant to Jordan and to the countries of the Middle East since the report proposes the

Royal Jordanian (RJ)

Filghts

utilisation of the region's military resources for development in the area.

"The report shares Jordan's commitment to ban weapons of mass destruction. to reduce defence spending and to promote strategies for regional economic integration," the Queen said.

"We believe that the report's recommendations which are based on a wider theoretical framework of social development represent useful and valuable perspectives for the Social Summit in Cophenhagen in March 1995." Opeen Noor said.

Dr. Ghali, in turn, acknowledged the contribution of NGOs and welcomed the commission's report. The International Commission on Peace and Food, founded in 1989, is an independent nonprofit organisation of concerned scientists and professionals working to develop practical strategies and programmes to accelerate progress, peace and political stability in all countries, to ensure food security and jobs for all, to promote human development and to formulate strategies for the protection of the environment.

Oucen Noor contributed to the report of the working group on strategies to accelerate human development and participated in the commission's fifth plenary meeting held in 1993.

The Queen also met with members of the ICPF in Amman, where she accepted a proposal by the commission that Jordan host a follow-up meeting in 1995. The proposed conference will bring together representatives of U.N. agencies and nongovernment organisations, as well as participants from Jordan and the region.

Accompanying Queen Noor was Jordan's permanent representative to the United Nations, Adnan Abe

While in New York, the Queen also met with Dr. Noel Brown, director of the United Nations Environment Programme and Mr. Louis D'Amato, president of the International Institute for Peace Through Tourism. Mr. D'Amato presented Queen Noor with a maquette of the 'Tree of Life" in appreciation of her efforts to develop travel and tourism to enhance international peace and understanding, advance development and promote environmental awareness.

JORDAN TELEVISION

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The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazarene Tel.675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

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University Hospital RASRAS
Al-Musher Hospital 6677778
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Amal Hospital 674155
ZAROA:
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(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990
ISBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Urees Cathone Hospital (02)272275
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555 Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275 Ibo Al Nafees Hospital (02)247100
AOABA:
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FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL **AIRPORT**

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Home News



Waleed Howrani plays classics, ragtime

AMMAN (J.T.) — World-renowned Lebanese pianist Waleed Howrani Friday night performed to a fullhouse at the Royal Cultural Centre during a recital organised by the National Music Conservatory of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, according to a Royal Court state-

This was Mr. Howrani's second piano recital in the Kingdom, said the statement. His Friday repertoire, the statement said, was drawn from pieces of Franz Schubert's Sonata in A minor, Op. 164, Frederic Chopin's Étude in E Sharp

WHAT'S

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VIENNESE

WALTZES

☆ "A Night of Viennese

Waltzes'' (including

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Fiedermans, The Blue Danabe, Voices of Spring, and Tales From Vienna Woods) at Phi-

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BAZAAR

🛱 Annual bazaar (in-

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(titles not given).

LECTURE

EXHIBITIONS

r Èxhibition of paintings

Painting and water col-

ours exhibition by Suhail

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ture and Art.

Gallery.

Plastic art exhibition by

Laila Kawash at the

Royal Cultural Centre.

on leather by Iraqi artist Rakan Dabdub at the

Phoenix Gallery for Cul-

FILMS

cludes pastries, hand-

icrafts, and gifts) at the

Marriott Hotel at 10:30

Minor, Op. 25 and Nocturne in D Flat Major, Op. 53 and Boghos Gelalian's Sonata per Pianaforte. Mr. Howrani also played ragtime selections by Scott Joplin and James Johnson.

Born in New York in 1948, Mr. Howrani later moved to Beirut where he began his musical tutorship at the age of 13 under the late Soviet Armenian composer Aram Khachaturian. After graduating with high distinction from the Central Music School in Moscow, Mr. Howrani obtained his master and postgraduate degrees from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory where he studied with the

celebrated pianists Yakov Zak and Emil Gilels. At the age of 18, he was awarded the Certificate of Honour at the Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition and two years later Mr. Howrani was awarded the

Laureate at the Queen Eli-

zabeth of Belgium competi-

The pianist has conducted concert tours in the former Soviet Union, Europe, the Middle East, Canada and in over 100 cities in the U.S.

The piano recital was held under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Ghida Talal, the statement said.

TCC chief heads for Cairo talks

AMMAN (Petra) - The Telecommunication Corporation Director General Walid Dweik Friday left for Cairo at the head of a delegation to take part in the 3rd meeting of the standing Arab committee on communications, which starts today. In a departure statement, Mr. Dweik said the committee will discuss the outcome of the Kioto Telecommunications Conference, the International Conference for Developing Communications, the Middle East and Africa Telecommunications Forum and exhibition, the Euro-Arab dialogue on communications, and GATT. He said a sub-committee on operations will discuss the telephone and telex rates among Arab countries.

Regent calls for improved pensions successfully — officials

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Thursday called on the government to reconsider the Pension Law with a view to improving pensions of retired servicemen and civil servants, in implementation of His Majesty King Hussein's

In a letter to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Prince Hassan said, "I am conveying to you the desire of His Majesty King Hussein to amend the Military Pen-sion Law to ensure a dignified life for our retired servicemen who were dedicated in their long years of service

tion, and who continuously sacrificed in the Kingdom's battle for existence and its efforts at nation-building."

"As civil servants have served their country and people with dedication, so too have their military colleagues, and it is our duty to improve their salaries upon

retirement," the Regent said. The Royal directive stems from King Hussein's keen appreciation of the importance of work and improving productivity, in addition to the role played by the Jordanian Armed Forces in safeguarding national develop-ment, the Crown Prince said.

3 more political parties join the 8 opposed to peace treaty

Jordanian parties, the Baath Progressive Party, the Jordan Democratic Progressive Party and the Jordanian Constitutional Front, have joined the grouping of eight other parties opposed to the peace treaty with Israel, according to a statement issued Friday. In the statement the eight parties declared their approval of the three other parties in joining the opposition, adding that representatives of

all these groups held a dialogue earlier. The statement said that the move was a positive step, it orged all other political

groups in Jordan to join in The original eight political parties, which have declared their opposition to capitulation and normalisation of relations with Israel are: the Jordanian Baath Socialist Party, the Islamic Action Front, the National Action Front, the Jordan Socialist Democratic Party, the Jordan Democratic People's Party, the Jordanian Communist Party, the Jordan Democratic Arab Party and the Jordan Democratic People's Unionist Party.

There are 23 registered political parties in the King-

Delegation returns from Hikmat Al Masri funeral

Thursday returned to Amman from Nablus after attending the funeral of Hikmat Al Masri, a former minister who died Tuesday the group, special arrange-

Thousands of mourners from Gaza and the West Bank attended the funeral of the late Mr. Masri, uncle of the Lower House Depu-ty and former Prime Minister Taher Al Masri,

legation of Parliament members, ministers and prominent Jordanian and Palestinian individuals same day..

at the age of 87. According to Deputy Ali Abul Ragheb, who was among ments were made for the delegation to cross into the West Bank and return the

Despite that central econo-

creation of the country's inmic policies are always obsolete and of no help to the dustry.

announced general programmes for development schemes, but although the private sector was responsible for many of the projects, it also had been solely en-trusted with the task of fund-

1994 census concludes

By Amy Henderson Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Thursday marked the completion of field work for Jordan's national census, and according to an official at the Department of Statistics, the five-day enumeration was deemed a success.

"Everything went according to plan," said Abdullah Abdelaziz Zoubi, executive director of the 2000, executive the department 1994 census. The department estimated that they should have surveyed approximately 625,000 homes during the five-day cen-

In an interview with the Jor dan Times, Dr. Zoubi said that field workers encountered few problems, although some homes
— 15-20 at best estimate — in the Kingdom remained uncounted as of Friday. This, he said, was because

census takers were unable to locate some homes or people had been anavailable to answer ques-

There were also refusals by some families to participate in

"We will be trying to locate these people this week, and we will try to convince the others to participate in the census," he

Although the department hosted a two-month census awareness campaign, emphasis-ing the importance of a census and attempting to allay public scepticism surrounding the census, many remained suspicious of the motives for the count given

Most Jordanians are agreed on the necessity of a census in Jor-dan, but remain wary of its purpose given some of the census questions.

Why, many are asking, is it ecessary to know where parents and grandparents are from? And what constitutes a refugee? When I first heard about the census, I could understand that they do need to count the people here — it's a government's right to know who is living within its borders," said Muna Shami, a 38-year-old teacher. "But when I heard the questions they were asking, I started to ask myself what is the purpose of this cen-

Mrs. Shami is of Lebanese origin married to a Jordanian who is of West Bank, Palestinian origin, and is a displaced person of 1967.

"Something I strongly disagreed with," said Mrs. Shami, "is that in 1967, the West Bank was part of Jordan — you can't call your own citizens refugees. Also, my children were born in Amman, but they consider them

refugees from 1967." "Maybe they need this in-formation to discuss the status of refugees in upcoming peace talks," said one 49-year-old Jordanian of Palestinian origin, who wished to remain anony mous. "But what is the purpose of knowing where my grandparents are from? They are dead. Besides, I don't even know where they are from originally — I don't even know where my own Statistics department officials have consistently maintained that the only objective of the census is to establish the number of inhabitants in each governorate so as to facilitate policymaking and planning in logota-

making and planning in Jordan. The census should shed light on the population of the Kingdom as well as provide information about employment, educa-tion and other demographics.

One family, however, said they did not recall being asked about their academic qualifica-tions or employment status. "They came to our house (on Thursday)," said Sylvia Hairabedian. "To be honest, they did not ask us many questions other than how many household members. their ages and where they were born. They did not ask us about

jobs or anything, although I've heard other people say that they have been asked those things. Others have complained that other questions did not belong in the census — for example, ques-tions regarding property own-ership and value — wondering

why this information was re-levant. returned to the Department of Statistics during the next few days. According to Dr. Zoubi, preliminary results from the cen-sus (number of people, age and sex) will be available within the next 10 days, while the results of November's 10 per cent population sampling will be publ

Results from the general census, he said, will not be available until October 1995.

JBA chief blames bureaucracy for lower private sector performance

mother was born."

AMMAN (J.T.) — Excessive bureaucracy and government intervention in private sector activities have had adverse effects on the private sector's performance in past years, charged Hamdi Tabbaa. chairman of the Jordanian Businessmen's Association (JBA).

In an address delivered at the Amman rotary club Thursday, Mr. Tabbaa said government intervention in pricing commodities ob-structed the mechanism of the market's operations, and conflicting government resolutions were mainly responsible for confusion and market price fluctuations.

country's economy, the private sector seldom feels that. the government is following a specifics and clear economic policy, Mr. Tabbaa said. The government simply

ing these schemes, added Mr. Tabbaa.

Referring to private sector activities since the 1950s, Mr. Tabbaa said this sector was primarily responsible for the

Referring to privatisation, ' which he said was of paramount importance to the country's national economy. Mr. Tabbaa said that private corporations usually save significantly in administrative. expenses and stop waste. which is a regular feature of the public sector.

He said privatisation improves performance, reduces government control and in-. tervention in economic sectors, develops the financial market and encourages competition which leads to better . quality products.

18/12/94

19/12/94

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22/12/94

Franco-Arab film festival to present new tendencies in region's cinema

By Jennifer Hamarneh Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Starting Sunday evening, the French embassy, **NOVEL RECITAL** in cooperation with the ☆ Novel recital by Yousel Abdul Hameed Shoman Ghishan at the Phoenix Foundation, will present an Gallery for Culture and array of contemporary Franco-Arab films from countries of the Mediterranean: Algeria, Morocco. Tunisia, France, Syria and 🛱 Film for children at Egypt. 4:00 p.m. and another

According to a French one for adults at 5:00 embassy spokesperson, this "cinema festival" is a first in Jordan and will include lecp.m. at Goethe-Institut tures, meetings and work-shops conducted by profes-☆ :Lecture (in Arabic) ensionals of diverse backgrounds. Most of these activititled "Towards a New ties, which will be conducted :Perspective of Women" either at the French Cultural by Dr. Fahimah Sharaf Centre in Jabal Luweibdeh or Al Din of Lebanon at the Abdul Hameed Founda-**Abdul Hameed Shoman** tion hall in Jabal Amman, Foundation at 6:00 will precede the showing of

the films. The organisers of the festival believe that at a time when regional cooperation is witnessing important de-velopments in all fields, "the cultural sector must not lag behind." Thus, the six films they have chosen to present this week represent new tendencies in the modern cinema

of the region. Egyptian director Yousri Nasrallah's 1993 film "Mercedes" plunges his cast of Yousra, Zaki Abdel Wahab, Menha Batraoui and Magdi Kamel into a kettle of human emotions and principles. Romance at a Cairo cock-

tail party later finds Warda with the child of an African diplomat.. Warda is forced to marry an old and wealthy Egyptian to "save the family honour." She names her son Nubi — he is not black but his features speak of his origin. As a young man Nubi is restless, idealistic and is committed to a psychiatric asylum. When released, he begins his quest for contact with reality and for those whom he calls his "real people, his real

family.' "The Extras" is a 1993 Syrian production about ever-painful, ever-tempting "forbidden love." Czecheducated Nabi Maleh, directs actors Samar Sami and Bassam Koussa in a tale about a young man who falls in love with a widow. Tired of meeting in public places, the couple borrows a friend's flat, only to find that the oppression outdoors still permeates their indoor "make-believe

oasis of freedom." "Youcef: The Legend of the Seventh Sleeper" takes its name and theme from a legend about seven men who and wake to the tremendous changes around them. In this

1993 film, Director Mohammad Chonikh guides Youcef through his escape from an Algerian psychiatric ward, where as a former resistance fighter he believes himself to still be a prisoner of the French army. Youcef hides out in the bush, making short incursions into nearby farms and villages. But what he sees terrifies him - to Youcef, his countrymen have betrayed

their cause. In "Cheb," award-winning Algerian director Rachid Bouchareb recreates on screen the painful, "impossi-ble" challenge of a youth expelled from France, the country where he was raised. overnight finding himself in his native (but to him unknown) Algeria and forced into military service where again he is a foreigner. "Cheb," produced in 1991 was presented at the Cannes. Berlin, and Locarno film festivals and represented Alger-

ia at the Academy Awards. Director Nacer Khemir utilises his renowned talents as a calligrapher in his 1991 film "The Lost Necklace of the Dove." In a dream-like mosaic of pictures, Hassan, the hero of this French-Italian-Tunisian production, is learning Arabic calligraphy fall asleep for three centuries at the height of the eleventh century Andalusian period. He is preoccupied with his

pursuit of synonyms for the word love and dreaming about the princess of Samarkand.

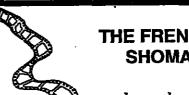
Moroccan-born director

Mohammad Abdul Rahman Tazi's lead character, Hadj Ben Moussam, divorces the favourite of his three wives, Houda, in a fit of jealousy involving a sheep merchant. Madly in love with Houda, and regretting his action, Hadj Ben Moussam must follow Koranic law to win his sensual beauty back. Accordingly, Houda must marry and divorce another man before Hadj Ben Moussam can remarry her. Mr. Tazi's "Looking for the Husband of My Wife," produced in 1993, tracks the great ordeal of this pursuit borne by an already icalous man.

The organisers of the Franco-Arab Cinema Festival hope that "in its own modest way," this festival will "spawn a long series of similar events and integrate this capital into the cinematography circuit of the region."

They admit that such an ambition depends on how much support this project can earn and on the response it will receive from the public, particularly from the younger

segment of the population. All films will be shown at the Concorde cinema in Am-



THE FRENCH EMBASSY AND SHOMAN FOUNDATION

have the pleasure to present ...

THE FRANCO-ARAB FILM FESTIVAL

AT CINEMA CONCORD 18 - 23 December 1994, 8.30 p.m.

Showing the following films:

Yousry Nasrallah (Egypte/France) MERCEDES THE EXTRAS Nabil Maleh (Syria) YOUCEF Mohammed Chouikh (Algeria) .Rachid Bouchareb (France/Algeria)

CHEB THE LOST NECKLACE OF THE DOVE Nacer Khemir (France/Italy/Tunisia)

IN SEARCH OF THE HUSBAND OF MY WIFE Mohammed Abdurrahman Tazi (Morocco) 23/12/94

Price: 1 JD ONLY at the cinema entrance. .

EXCLUSIVELY SHOWING "SHAHADOUN WA NOUBALA" AT CINEMA PHILADELPHIA SATURDAY 17/12/94 at 8.30 p.m. in the presence of the director Asma BAKRI.



sion on Economic and Tech-

Caucasus Republic of

leaders last week when he

told an international confer-

ence the United States was

isolating Russia by inviting

Eastern European states to

join NATO, which would

bring NATO to the borders

Meanwhile a bomb alert

forced the wife of U.S. Vice

President Al Gore to cancel a

visit to Moscow school Fri-

day, ITAR-TASS reported.

Tipper Gore, who is accompanying her husband

on a three-day tour here,

cancelled her: appearance at School Number 1,234 after

an anonymous telephone cal-

ler announced that a bomb

The school was immediate-

ly evacuated and police sear-

her as part of a staff over-

It also comes on the heels

of a series of other recent

departures from the White

House, including the resigna-

tion earlier this month of

Treasury Secretary Lloyd

Bentsen and the firing last

week of Surgeon General

Agriculture Secretary

Mike Espy will also leave the

administration on Dec. 31,

and there have been rumours

of other shifts in the cabinet.

had been planted there.

ched the premises.

of Russia

Mr. Yeltsin jolted world

Indian doctors hope music will: help ex-president

NEW DELHI (R) - Doctors have placed earphones on former Indian President

Zail Singh hoping Sikh spiritual music might help him

recover from critical injuries

received in a car accident last

month. Dr. Pramila Chari

told the Press Trust of India

the earphones, attached to a

portable walkman cassette

recorder, were placed on Mr.

Singh Tuesday in hopes the

continuous music would help

him recover. India's only

Sikh head of state, Mr.

Singh, 78, was president from 1982 to 1987 during a violent

revolt by members of his Sikh

religion. His condition has

deteriorated past days and he

has not responded to verbal

requests for three days. Dr.

Chari said the former presi-

dent had begun moving his

eyes since the earphones

playing cassettes of Sukh-mani Sahib, traditional Sikh

spiritual music, were placed

Zimbabwe MP:

Condon use plot

against Africans

U.K. Conservatives trounced by landslide in by-elections

CAMBRIDGE, England (R) - Prime Minister John Major, reeling after his ruling Conservative were trounced in a parliamentary byelection. Friday conceded it was a very poor result and urged his bickering party to reunite behind him.

In the biggest swing from the Conservatives to the Labour Party since 1935, Graham Posties polled less than a fifth of the votes in the central England seat of Dudiey West, which had been held by Mr. Major's party for 15 years.

Voters swept Labour candidate Ian Pearson to victory and sent a clear signal they were disillusioned by Conservative splits over Europe, tax rises and allegations of sleaze in Mr. Major's deeply unpopular govern-

The Conservatives suffered meltdown — only 7,706 people voted for the ruling party compared with 34,729 at the April 1992 general election. Labour's vote held steady at 28,400. Mr. Major, visiting a flag

Wave of

Japanese

student

suicides

continues

TOKYO (R) — Japanese police said Friday that the

number of deaths in a wave

of student suicides had risen

to five, despite appeals to

bullied or troubled youngs-

ters to resist the temptation

A 14-year-old schoolboy

hanged himself and a 13-

year-old boy jumped in front

of a moving train Thursday in

Saitama prefecture, north of

Tokyo, adding to a string of

youth suicides which have

hours after a group of psychiatrists issued a state-

ment urging students not to

copy three bullying victims

who committed suicide over

The deaths, widely covered

in the media, have triggered

bullying in Japan's tightly dis-

ciplined school system and

the victimisation of children

who somehow stand out from

But local police quoted

teachers, parents and class-

mates of the two latest

suicides as saying they could

not think of any reason for

their action. The 13-year-old

boy left no suicide note, but

the other student said in his

note," this is an experiment

to find out what will happen

rammes reported a string of suicides as a result of bul-

lying, mine is a mere ex-

periment I would never kill

myself because of bullying,"

The student's father told

police his son had been read-

ing a book explaining ways of

"It is a critical situation,"

Hiroshi Inamura, a psychiat-

ry professor at Hitotsubashi

University, told Reuters. It

looks like the beginning of

copycat suicides among stu-

dents who are not involved in

bullying or have any serious

Prof. Inamura, one of the

psychiatrists who issued the

statement, said the situation

reminded him of a wave of

suicides triggered by the

suicide of a popular singer in

beautify and yearn for death,

and massive media coverage

of student suicides easily

prompts them to follow

media to stop covering them.

If that is impossible, then

they should report such news

as calmly and simply as possi-

The case which first drew

media attention was that of

Kivoteru Okouchi, a 13-year-

old who hanged himself leav-

ing a note which said class-

mates repeatedly dunked him

in a nearby river and extorted

more than \$10,000 from him

The shockwaves from the

suicide spread as far as the

government, prompting

Prime Minister Tomiichi

Murayama to hold a special

cabinet meeting to discuss

Following the meeting, the

Education Ministry issued a

formal directive urging

teachers to crack down on

schoolyard bullying.

over a year.

"Teenagers tend to

"Although television prog-

to me after death."

the note said.

problem.

1986.

committing suicide.

the past three weeks.

The deaths came only

shocked Japan.

the crowd.

to take their own life.

factory in the eastern England town of Cambridge, told reporters: "It was a very poor result, but I think some good will come out of it."

"People within the party must now realise they must pull together towards the same end for the good of the country.

The Conservatives, at an all-time low in opinion polls, hope Britain's economic recovery will convert into a feel good factor" among voters by the time the next general election is called some time before mid-1997. Mr. Major conceded the

good news message was not getting through to ordinary Britons, still wary following the longest recession since

"People can see the country is doing much better, but they don't see that they and their families are benefiting,' After a catastrophic month

Mr. Major, prime minister since 1990, is now hoping the Christmas recess will give him a much needed chance to regroup before the new year.

The Conservatives' loss of the Dudley seat follows the ejection of eight conservative legislators from the parliamentary party two weeks ago for refusing to back Mr. Major in a vote over increasing Britain's payments to the European Union which he had declared a matter of confidence. A ninth resigned.

If these nine MPs returned to the Conservative fold, the party would now have a precarious 13-seat majority. These rebels helped Labour vote down a doubling of tax on home heating fuel last week, perhaps the worst defeat suffered by Mr. Major.

Dudley was the first parliamentary by-election since Tony Blair took over as Labour leader in July, vowing to lead a new-look moderate party freed from its hardline Socialist past. Mr. Blair said the resound-

had run its course and people were turning to Labour for new ideas. The Conservatives have been in power 15 years. "It's an extraordinary vic-

ing victory showed the Con-

servative agenda of the 1980s

tory. It's a devastating defeat for the government," he said. "It is a test, not just of how unpopular and discredited the government are, but also a test of 'new labour'."

Speaking of a "bond of trust" between Labour and the nation, he said: "People are turning to our party and our ideas but I am not in any shape or form complacent... the agenda of the '80s may have run its course but people want an agenda for the

The 29 per cent swing to Labour was the biggest since 1935 when Labour won a seat In Liverpool on a 30 per cent swing in a freak result after the intervention of a highprofile candidate standing as an independent Conserva-

The minority Liberal Democrats, who have won three by-elections since the last general election, fared poorly at Dudley, crushed by the enthusiasm of voters to vote for the candidate most likely to turn the Conserva-

Uneasy peace reigns in contested Angolan town <u>UIGE</u>, Angola (R) — Angola's ceasefire is hanging by a fighting. "Our orders are not to

thread in the northern town of Uige where government troops are encamped just a grenade's throw away from their UNITA rebel foes. "We are at peace now,"

said Joaquim Gonga, a government soldier on the Uige perimeter, gesturing at a group of UNITA guards 100 metres away. "They are our brothers.'

But when asked to accompany journalists across the no-man's land, Gonga re-

"No way in the world," he said. "You can be sure if I go up there I will not come UNITA rebels surround

the town which government troops captured from themlast month as part of a broad offensive apparently aimed at gaining control of as much territory as possible ahead of the ceasefire signed in Lusa-ka on Nov. 20.

"I am personally worried about the situation in Uige," General Chris Garuba, the chief U.N. military officer in Angola, said this week. Both sides are in too close contact ... this is very pro-

Gen. Garuba heads about 80 U.N. observers who are monitoring the ceasefire. Their numbers are due to increase to about 500 by next Six young government sol-

diers sheltering from the rain under a mango tree in Uige said they did not expect more out to happen."

attack anybody," one said. "We do not think there will be an offensive here."

But Brigadier Joaquim Tchiloya, commander of government forces in the northern military region, issued a veiled warning to the rebel movement of Jonas Savimbi which still controls road access to Uige and the town of Negage, 35 kilometres away. "UNITA will keep Negage

if they behave themselves but if they do not behave then they will see what happens. If there was no ceasefire they would have lost Negage too," Brig. Tchiloya said.

He said the government offensive ahead of the ceasefire, which captured the UN-ITA headquarters of Huambo, had improved the chancs of lasting peace after nearly 20 years of civil war. "In any game there are

winners and losers," he said. "The game finishes, and somebody is the winner. UN-ITA controlled threequarters of Angola. Now

The head of the U.N. monitoring team in Uige, Colonel Luther Lauria of Argentina, said there had been skirmishes but no serious clashes around the town in the last fortnight.

"There is always friction because the two sides are so close," he said, "The situation is not very clear. UNITA has always wanted Uige but I do not think anything is ab-

Bhutto vows to fight Karachi 'mini-insurgency' are against Pakistan's unity ISLAMABAD (R) — Prime

Minister Benazir Bhutto said Friday that Pakistan was facing a "mini-insurgency" in its commercial capital, Karachi, and vowed her government would fight terrorists at all

after returning from a threeday Islamic summit meeting in Casablanca. "We know the designs of

terrorists roaming in Karachi," she said. "They

"There is a miniinsurgency in Karachi, there is guerrilla warfare and we should realise this," Ms. Bhutto told a news conference at Islamabad Airport

and we will fight them at all At least 109 people have been killed in Karachi in the past 15 days. Violence esca-lated after the government

withdrew troops from the city after two and half years of law-enforcement duties. Gunmen killed 13 people and wounded 27 in different areas of Karachi Thursday.

Ms. Bhutto said her government would seek to build up the civil administration and also take "political and economic measures to solve people's basic problems."

Pakistan claims diplomatic victory over Kashmir

ISLAMABAD (R) — Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said Friday that Pakistan had won a major diplomatic victory in its dispute with India over Kashmir at an Islamic summit meeting this week in Casab-

She told a news conference on returning home from the three-day meeting of the 52member Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) that a declaration of support adopted Thursday had "internationalised" the Kashmir issue and brought it to the mainstream of the Muslim

The declaration backed a peaceful and political solution in Kashmir based on long-standing U.N. resolutions, which call for a plebiscite in the Himalayan region, where India is fighting a fouryear-old Muslim separatist revolt. Ms. Bhutto called the declaration "an historic achieve-

ment." "We think it will strengthen the Kashmiri people's movement. It has been internationalised to the extent that India's efforts to localise or bilateralise have been mullified forever."

New Delhi, which rules two-thirds of Kashmir, regards the former princely state as an integral part of the Indian union and is ready only for bilateral talks with Islamabad, which controls the remaining third.

But Islamabad says the predominantly Muslim Kashmiris must decide in the U.N.-mandated plebiscite whether to join Islamic Pakistan or secular but Hindumajority India.

China sentences 10 activists to up to 20 years

WASHINGTON (R) -BEUING (R) — A Beijing court Friday passed China's White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers has formally harshest sentences against notified U.S. President Bill Clinton she will leave her job political activists for several years, jailing nine dissidents at the end of the year, the for terms ranging from three Washington Post reported Friday. to 20 years.

The paper quoted Mr. Myers as saying her last day would be Dec. 31, but she The sentences were among the heaviest meted out to political dissidents since the would leave the White House nationwide purge that folnext week for Christmas with lowed the bloody army suppression of student-led proher family and would not democracy demonstrations in Beijing's Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989.

The Beijing Intermediate People's Court in the district of Babaoshan sentenced nine political activists to jail terms for "counter-revolutionary" crimes, or subversion, dropped charges against five and placed one under supervision

for two years.

"They are innocent, raged a relative of one of from the facts in the bill of indictment they are innocent. I am so angry. We never expected the sentence to be this heavy.

Hu Shigen, a 39-year-old lecturer at the Beijing languages institute, received the heaviest sentence of 20 years on charges of heading a counter-revolutionary group and "spreading counterrevolutionary propaganda,*
the verdict said.

Dozens of police guarded the two doors to the court and relatives of those indicted were barred from the courtroom.

Presiding Judge Wang Huiging later emerged and read out the sentences while those convicted were whisked to prison thorough a back All those sentenced plan-

ned to appeal, relatives said. "Perhaps they are sending warning to anyone considering using Mr. Deng's death to launch a protest against the Communist Party," a diplomat said. Paramount leader Deng

Xiaoping is 90 years old. Kang Yuchun, 30, a doctor, was sentenced to 17 years on the same two charges as Mr. Hu. Mr. Liu Jingsheng, 40, a chemical-factory worker, was jailed for 15 years on the same charges. Mr. Liu and Mr. Hu have already

appealed, relatives said. Wang Guoqi, aged 32 and unemployed, was jailed for 11 years for leading a counter-revolutionary group. "They (the sentences) are appallingly severe," said Robin Munro, Hong Kong

director of Human Rights Watch/Asia. "The severe level of the sentencing says... don't even think of engaging in even peaceful dissent.

The court passed five-year terms on Lu Zhigang, a 26year-old law student from Beijing University, along with Chen Wei, 25, unemployed Zhang Chunzhu, 42, and Wang Tiancheng, 30, a law lecturer at Beijing University for spreading counterrevolutionary propaganda and actively taking part in a counter-revolutionary group.

The defendants were arrested in May and June, 1992, for allegedly forming or joining three underground dissident groups and writing and printing political leaflets. | sustained global push toward

Russian Foreign Minister NATO," but gave no details. Andrei Kozyrev and U.S. Secretary of State Warren He said Mr. Yeltsin "looks healthy, he looks good." Christopher to discuss U.S.-Following surgery, Mr. Yeltsin has not made any Russian relations. But Mr. Gore did not say where it public statements for the last In a joint press conference week during which Russian troops have become embroiled in battles with secessionists in the small

wards.

Friday with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, the U.S. vice president

U.S. Vice President Al Gore (left) and Rus

Vice President Al Gore said

here Friday he had had "full

and productive" talks with

Russian President Boris Yelt-

sin on the future of the North

Atlantic Treaty Organisation

Mr. Gore, on a three-day

visit here, visited Mr. Yeltsin

in the Kremlin hospital where

the Russian leader has been

recovering from minor nasal

surgery since last Saturday. He said a meeting would

be held in January between

would take place.

(NATO).

hands prior to the fourth meeting of Russian- photo)

would do next, although she had held discussions on several job offers.

Clinton spokeswoman to quit at year-end

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin shake nological Cooperation in Moscow (AFP

Gore: Talks with Yeltsin 'productive'

"strong, dynamic and firmly on track."

Mr. Chernomyrdin said: "I

have all the reasons for a

Mr. Gore is making the first high-level visit here by a

U.S. official since a rift ear-

lier this month between Mos-

cow and Washington over

plans to expand NATO east-

After meeting Mr. Yeltsin, Mr. Gore said only they had had "full and productive dis-

cussion about the future of

certain sense of satisfaction.'

Ms. Myers, the first woman to hold the prestigious White House post, most likely will be replaced by State Department spokes-man Michael McCurry, the paper said, quoting unnamed

Ms. Myers' decision to leave the White House follows a failed attempt. by

Ms. Myers told the paper She had not decided what she earlier this year to replace

Portuguese government faces crisis out, the Lisbon daily Priblico said in a banner front page

etered on the brink of a political crisis Friday as headline Friday. But Cavaco Silva, who is Prime Minister Anibal Ćavaco Silva refused to say publicdue to address a crucial meetly whether he would lead the ing of the PSD's National ruling centre-right Social Council Saturday, declined to comment Friday political future.

He did not answer when Reuters asked him whether be would lead the PSD into the next parliamentary elections, due in October 1995.

Mr. Cavaco Silva, 55, also refused to say when he would reveal his political ambitions when questioned on the sidelines of a ministerial conference to sign the European

Joycelyn Eiders.

energy charter.
Publico quoted party and covernment sources as saying he would stay on as prime minister until the next elections, but would then return to being a university profes-

The report followed weeks of speculation that Mr. Cavaco would run for the presidency when his arch-rival, veteran socialist leader Mario Soares, steps down in 1996.

Political skirmishing between the two men reached a new climax this month when Mr. Soares voted the reappointment of the head of the air force.

HARARE (R) — A female member of Zimbabwe's par-

liament has said campaigns urging the use of condoms and other contraceptives were a piot by developed nations to wipe out Africans. "Condoms and contraceptives are a way of wiping out Africans. Africa is not overpopulated," legislator Ruth Chinamano told the house Thursday night during free debate abead of the Christmas and New Year holidays. "Whites want blacks to be less," she said. "Every action by developed countries since the days of slavery was for their own economic gain. We should view foreign prescription with suspicion." Ms. Chinamano, an outspoken member of President Robert Mugabe's ruling party, urged Zimbabwean women "never to be deceived to have few children because they will lose their marriages.' Minister jumps

into harbour in underwear to win... bet a automobiles and

BONN (AFP) — German Labour Minister Norbert Bluem jumped into a Greek harbour in his underwear in order to win a bet after drinking several glasses of ouzo, the minister's office said. The daily tabloid Bild reported that Mr. Bluem, 59, went on a cruise last Saturday near Athens after meeting with his Greek counterpart Yannis Skoularikis and then dined at a tavern with one of his associates who dared him to jump into the water for 80 German marks. Bild said the minister, who had downed a few glasses of ouzo, the Greek anisette drink, accepted the bet and proceeded to take his pants and shirts off before jumping into the water and making a few breaststrokes before an applauding audience.

City lights too much for wild boar

BIENNE, Switzerland (AFP)

- A wild boar that wandered into the centre of this western Swiss town panicked and charged an 82-year-old man before a game keeper shot and killed the animal, press reports said Friday. Walter Gilgen said he had been walking to his doctor's office when something ploughed into him from behind. Turning around he found himself facing a young, 70-kilgramme (154 pound) wild boar, who charged again then bit the man in the leg. Mr. Gilgen somehow managed to kick off the beast which ran away. Police and a game keeper, alerted by this time, tracked it down in a courtyard where it was shot. The gamekeeper said it had apparently been hit by a car after straying out of the forest, making it particularly aggressive. Mr. Gilgen was home again after being treated at hospital.

China to build 160 kg gold **Buddha statue**

BEIJING (R) - China is to use 160 kg of gold, 10 kg of platinum and 60 kg of silver to create a gem-encrusted statue of Buddha next year, the Xinhua News Agency said. It said the 2.8 metre high statue would be crafted by the Jinsheng Jewellery Co. and the Royal Jewellery and Arts Co. of the southern boom town of Shenzhen under the auspices of the Bureau of Religious Affairs, the State Council (cabinet) and the People's Bank of

Democracies are on rise but most people are not free, report says The leaders who attended

WASHINGTON (R) - The number of democracies has doubled over the past two decades but most of the world's population still live in lands where liberties are limited or denied, a U.S. human rights group reported Thursday.

LISBON (R) --- Portugal Te-

Political sources and the

Portuguese media say Mr.

Cavaco, an austere and re-

spected economist who has

led Portugal with a firm hand

for the past nine years, is

angry over a series of scan-

dals that have dogged his

party in recent months and is

"Cavaco is on the way

octat Party

1995 elections.

keen to quit.

The Freedom House 1994 report tallied 114 democracies — the largest number in history and up seven from last year. The new entries are Haiti, South Africa, Ukraine, Mozambique, Malawi, Guinea-Bissau and Palau. Only western Africa's

Gambia lost its democratic government this year. "Last year we had to report a dramatic drop in respect for political rights and civil liberties. This year we can report modest gains," Freedom House Chairwoman

Bette Bao Lord told a news

conference. Freedom House describes itself as a non-partisan, nonprofit and non-governmental group that monitors political rights and civil liberties in 191 nations and 58 territories.

Its survey said 60 per cent of the countries are now formai democracies, defined as systems where people freely elect authorities among competing groups or individuals. But a vast majority of the world's population still lives in countries and territories that fall in Freedom House's "partially free" or "not free" categories, where basic rights are either curtailed for simply denied.

Its president, Adrian Karatnycky, said that despite the opportunities arising from the end of the cold war, there is little evidence of a

societies that provide strong protection for those rights. 'Freedom continues to elude the vast majority of the

world's people, with nearly 40 per cent living in partly free states and 40 per cent living in not free states," he The nominal increase of democracies is also offset by

a rise in the number of countries at risk of slipping back. Mr. Karatnycky listed ethnic and sectarian strife, government corruption, exessive military and oligarchic influence and foreign destabilisation attempts as some of the major threats facing fledgling democracies.

Bosnia was singled out as a typical case where a government cannot guarantee its citizens' basic rights due to the war between Muslim and Serb groups. Freedom House noted that former Soviet Bloc countries

like Russia, Ukraine and

Romania had advanced in

their transition to democracy

but warned that they still risked regressing. "These countries have made substantial progress toward the expansion of freedom but they have not yet crossed the threshold and risk slippling back," Mr. Karat-

nycky said. Government corruption and the influence of drug cartels were cited as major threats for Latin American democracies.

Singled out in the survey were Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Panaguay and Venezuela, all of which were rated as "partially free."

last weekend's summit of the Americas would have us believe otherwise, but the fact is that only three countries in Latin America have firmly established rule of law: Costa Rica, Chile and Uruguay, said Freedom House's Latin America expert, Douglas Payne.

At the bottom of the group's rating were 21 countries and six territories where basic rights suffered the most

That list included Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bhutan, Burma, China, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Iraq, Libya, Mauritania, North Korea, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Viet-

Sudan was deemed the worst offender. Iraq was a close second, followed by North Korea. Freedom House argued

that strengthening emerging democracies should be a focal point of U.S. aid policy, as well as countries' respect for human rights and liberties. Mr. Karatnycky said there

was no reason to dole out U.S. taxpayers' money to help Indonesia's one-party state or Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori, who closed down a democratically elected Congress in 1992, or Mauritania, which condones slave labour.

"A country like Kenva. which has a military dicta-torship, is due to receive \$40 million in assistance this year. which is more than the entire budget of the U.S. National endowment for Democracy," he added.

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World News

Europeans approve big probe on origin of universe

GENEVA (R) — Officials type since the United States ject will allow scientists to from 19 European countries Friday approved construction of a \$2 billion particle accelerator that scientists hope will unlock secrets of the origin of the universe.

The decision by the Council of Cern, the European laboratory for particle phy-

sics, ended a bitter six-month

row over the cost of the

world's largest project of its

abandoned a similar prog-Cern's member states had

been due to approve building of the accelerator, the large hadron collider (LHC), ear-lier this year but it was blocked by Germany and Britain who wanted to ensure costs did not spiral out of control. When completed, the prorecreate conditions identical to those at the time of the big bang" when the universe came into existence.

Under a compromise plan, Cern's budget will be frozen until 1998 and severely cap-

ped in the following 10 years. The LHC will be built in two

stages by leaving out some of the costly super-conductor

Cern Director-General Clive Llewellyn-Smith con-

magnets which give it its pow-

ceded that the two-stage option would delay some cutting-edge research. But after delegates approved the compromise by acclamation he said the decision ensured the future for particle physics and for Cern.

Czechs, Russia in secret nuclear deal —

PRAGUE (R) — The Czech Republic and Russia have struck a secret nuclear reprocessing deal under which Prague will receive plutonium in breach of international treaties, the environmental group Greenpeace said Fri-

Greenpeace released copies of what it said was a contract signed by Czech Finance Minister Ivan Kocarnik and representatives of the Russian government on Dec.

Under the contract, the Czechs would send nuclear waste to Russia, where it

would be reprocessed. Products from this reprocessing, including plutonium and radioactive waste, would be sent back to the Czech Republic.

Greenpeace spokesman Petr Hlobil said the Russianlanguage contract had been leaked to its Moscow office. "In our view, it (the deal) is illegal and the contract should be immediately reiected," he told a news conference.

Officials at the Czech Finance Ministry were not im-mediately available for com-

Mr. Hlobil said that the deal flouted international agreements, notably the nuc-lear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), a 1970 accord deigned to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. The contract did not

make clear whether the plutonium would be enriched or weapons grade. 'Ît's not, mentioned in the document whether it is en-

riched or not. That would depend on (other) specific agreements between the two sides," said Alexandr Knorr of Greenpeace Moscow, who also attended the news con-

Greenpeace

The Czech Republic inherited a nuclear power prog-ramme from the Communist government which fell in 1989.

Prague has refused to halt the programme despite international concerns about the safety of the Soviet-designed nucléar plants which are already operating or are under construction.

Scrapping the nuclear programme would force the country to burn more brown coal, which inflicts severe environmental damage due to its high sulphur content.

Delors says decision was tough but irrevocable

PARIS (Agencies) — European Commission President Jacques Delors said Friday his decision not to run for the French presidency was difficult but irrevocable, and he rejected criticism by President Francois Mitterrand.

Interviewed on France-Inter radio, Mr. Delors said he would support whoever the Socialist Party chose as its candidate for the election next April and May, provided they wanted his help.

"If they say, Mr. Delors, you're not a candidate. Be quiet,' then I will be quiet," he said.

Asked if he would reconsider his decision if there were a big campaign to draft him, Mr. Delors said: "No, that would look messy. No, whatever happens. There will be no momentum... Many people are happy that I'm not running. Life goes on, you know.

He hit back at Mr. Mitterrand's veiled criticism that it took tenacity and patience to: change society, and it was easier to stay popular by re-coiling on the threshold of

"The balance sheet of my 10 years (in Brussels) is mixed, but if there is one thing nobody has ever accused me of, it is lacking tenacity and obstinacy," Mr. Delors said.

learned a lesson in political strategy from Mr. Mitterrand in the 1970s "so I am not suspect on that account." The 69-year-old EU chief

He added that he had

quipped that after leaving Brussels next month he would "demonstrate for a 40hour week for myself' after working a 100-hour week for the last decade.

Asked if he did not regret his decision, given his ambitions to shake up society, Mr. Delors said: "To get elected, you are forced to make concessions on the edges. So you can't play all roles."

Mr. Delors Friday criticised conservative presidential hopeful Jacques Chirac for changing his spots on Europe.

"Had I been a candidate, other candidates, in order to occupy the political field, would have recalled that nearly one in two French people voted against the Maastricht Treaty (on greater European Union) and would have sought to seize those votes," he told France-Inter

But "as of the day when I'm no longer there, some people want to occupy the pro-European space. That's pure electoral tactics," he said, referring to Paris Mayor and Rally For the Republic leader Chirac who has spoken out against the Maas-

tricht Treaty. Mr. Chirac Thursday met with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, assuring him he wanted to put a Franco-German entente to work in developing European unity if

he is elected. "The chancellor has the conception of a more federal Europe, in France we do not have the same culture, the same interests, but I am convinced that we can reach an

accord," Mr. Chirac said. "I came to assure myself that there is enough flexibility in the German position and to say that there is flexibility in the French posi-tion," he added.

German commentators have expressed concern that the neo-Gaullist Paris mayor has views which do not coincide with Mr. Kohl's vision of Europe.

The chancellor himself had scarcely hidden his preference for Mr. Delors as the next French head of state to succeed Francois Mitterrand in the spring.

Mr. Chirac's Bonn visit

was preceded by an article for

Le Monde newspaper in which he said France and Germany must "deepen their entente and together build a joint project for Europe." presidential election must make known his conception

and his vision of Franco-German relations over the years ahead," Mr. Chirac wrote in Le Monde. Meanwhile, it has been a disastrous week for France's non-Communist left-wing,

which could take years, or even a decade, to recover. It must now go into next year's presidential election almost naked after the withdrawal of Mr. Delors and ex-Premier Michel Rocard and the fall of populist vote-

getter Bernard Tapie.

In a mere five days, the leftist bloc that Socialist President Francois Mitterrand led to power in 1981 imploded. Opinion polls now suggest it may not even have a candidate in the presidential runoff second ballot next May.

Opinion polls suggest that of the remaining potential left-wing contenders, only former Culture Minister Jack Lang, popular among the young, has significant sup-

But many Socialists feel that after the scandals of the Mitterrand era, the flamboyant Lang, stripped of his seat in parliament last year for campaign overspending, may be too flashy for the role. He also lacks economic or foreign policy weight.

Socialist leaders are talking instead of dusting off a "moral figure" such as former Justice Minister Robert Badinter, expEducation Minister Lionel Jospin or former Defence Minister Pierre Joxe as a latigety symbolic candidate.

All three are intellectuals with impeccable ethicals credentials but without the ia, economic cre ity or common touch to attract a broad electorate.

One possible candidate with plenty of government experience is former Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy, but he is probably too associated with the tax-and-spend poli-cies and nationalisations of the early Mitterrand years to have wide appeal.

The 1994 winter onslaught in the thickly wooded Ardennes region in southern Bel-

gium was one of the bloodiest battles of World II, pitting crack German armoured divisions against unprepared and thinly spread U.S. defenders. "You fought in bitter ice cold weather like today. You emonstrated tanks run on gas but infantrymen run on

George Joulwan, told assembled veterans - Beigians as well as Americans.

Belgium's King Albert and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright, flanked by two

surprise attack on the lightly defended 140 kilometres

Clinton at the ceremony.

The six-week battle was dubbed the Battle of the Bulge because of the large dent German forces made in the front line as they pushed towards the northern Belgian

The Germans failed when U.S. resistance stiffened and they ran short of fuel to keep the advance going. Clearer weather finally allowed

World War II, with almost 90,000 men killed, wounded or missing. There were 100,000 Ger-

the attacking force.

some U.S. veterans near the German border in eastern

points of the battle. The U.S. commander in

Bastogne, General Anthony

McAuliffe, found his forces cut off by the advancing Germans and was called on to surrender. His curt reply -"nuts" — came to symbolise U.S. resistance against overwhelming odds.

The town re-enacted siege,

Belgian and U.S. flags hung outside many houses and Bastogne's main square was festooned with flags and other decorations in rememberance of the battle.

aide to Gen. McAuliffe during the battle, said it meant a great deal to return to the region's towns, see them restored and people "happily preparing for Christmas in peace and freedom."

U.N.: Sarajevo airport tests Serb commitment to end war

SARAJEVO (R) - The United Nations said Friday the first big test of Bosnian Serb commitment to their latest proposals to end the civil war would come Saturday when they are expected to allow Sarajevo Airport to reopen. The Bosnian Serb Army told the United Nations that the airport, shut down for

more than one month, could reopen for U.N. Protection Forces flights Saturday, UN-PROFOR spokesman Jan-Dirk Merveldt told reporters Alexander Ivanko, UN-PROFOR civilian spokesman, said the partial reopen-

ing of the airport only for UNPROFOR flights will be the first test of the latest Serb promises of cooperation. "We're seeing some nor-malisation but as always we have very few facts to prove that. Let's see tomorrow if the airport will be open or

not. That will be the main

point," he said. Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic told Reuters in an interview that his side is already implementing almost all the proposals he has put forward in a plan to end the

'We have announced the airport is safe and open, we have ceased fire in and around Sarajevo, we have normalised our relations with UNPROFOR, the convoys are getting through mostly, and that is going to stay that way," Mr. Karadzic said.

Fein's

Adams

DUBLIN (R) - Newly

elected Irish Prime Minister

John Bruton, honouring a

pledge to make Northern Ire-

land his top priority, met Sinn Fein President Gerry

up to cash in on the dividend

brought about by almost four

months of unprecedented

peace in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Bruton's gesture was

seen aimed at dispelling

doubts that he would take a

tougher line on Sinn Fein, the

Irish Republican Army's

political wing, than his prede-

The new premier and Sinn

Fein were reported to have clashed at a previous session of

the national forum for peace and reconciliation but Mr. Bruton dismissed the ex-

change as "normal political

on the work of my predeces-

sor. The next step is recon-

ciliation to bring the people together in harmony," Mr.

Before shaking hands with

Mr. Bruton, Mr. Adams said

he hoped for an early meet-

ing with the new Irish govern-

"His predecessor, Mr.

Albert Reynolds, played a crucial role in the evolution

and development of the

peace process, and I am sure Mr. Bruton would like to do

the same thing," he said. Mr. Bruton said he hoped

ment to push for peace.

Bruton told Irish Radio.

"I am determined to build

argument."

cessor, Albert Reynolds.

The Serb leader's six-point peace plan, dismissed by the Bosnian government and greeted with scepticism by the West, included reopening Sarajevo airport, releasing detained U.N. personnel and granting free passage to aid

Col. Merveldt said the U.N. was given a clear mes-sage that the Bosnian Serbs have decided to normalise relations with UNPROFOR. A resumption of supplies was vital both to thousands of

civilians solely dependent on

outside aid to survive the

harsh Balkan winter and for UNPROFOR down to last drops of fuel. Col. Merveldt said British soldiers in the eastern enclave of Gorazde will begin using mules to resupply

observation posts. Two U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) employees were freed late Thursday and at least two relief workers for the private International Rescue Committee (IRC) were also released after Serbs detained them Wednesday, a U.N. relief official said.

But the Serbs kept two vehicles they stole from the IRC workers, the official said.

Mr. Karadzic, who also offered to give up some Serb-held territory, said: "We propose an end to the war followed by peace talks on territorial and political issues. "We want to develop our

own country, our society, we want to go back to economy and to forget about the poli-

He also asked former U.S. President Jimmy Carter to mediate in the 32-month-old Bosnian conflict.

But the Muslim-led Bos-

nian government dismissed Mr. Karadzic's offer as a bid to distract attention from a five-nation peace plan, calling for a roughly 50-50 split between the Serbs and a Muslim-Croat federation. which the Serbs have reiected.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, in Casablanca for an Islamic summit, told Bosnian radio: "If he (Carter) is coming to offer a new political plan I think such a visit is counter-productive and it could take credibility and strength away from the

contact group and its plan."

The meeting of the 52member Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) promised financial and diplomatic support for Bosnia's Muslims and threatened economic measures against countries which supported their Serb adversaries.

Western governments dis-missed Mr. Karadzic's proposals, saying the Serbs signed agreements earlier pledging full cooperation with U.N. operations, including security for the airport.

But after U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali wel-

PROFOR reversed its earlier rejection of Mr. Carter's in-

volvement. Mr. Ivanko said: "If he can help with this visit, of course we are very supportive of any peace initiative coming from such an influential figure as the former American presi-

The U.S. government, which initially responded coolly towards Mr. Karadzic's proposals, threw its weight behind Mr. Carter but warned that he would not go to Bosnia unless the Serb leader made good on the six-point plan.

U.N. military observers said Serb and allied rebel Muslim forces have captured vital high ground south of Velika Kladusa, the secondmost important town in the Bosnian enclave of Bihac. U.N. sources said Friday

whoever controls the high ground north of Bihac town, a IJ.N.-declared safe havenwith around 180,000 inhabitants, has control of the whole territory. A Reuters Television crew

on the spot reported Thursday that rebel Muslim forces of Fikret Abdic have taken the Palzikur Hill overlooking Kladusa, completing its encirclement. U.N. sources said the

observers expected Mr. Abdic's forces to roll south of Bihac town "once they finish the Kladusa action.

Mandela urges patience from supporters **New Irish** premier BLOEMFONTEIN, South side Bloemfontein, where his in the squatter camp. Africa (R) — South African President Nelson Mandela, African National Congress meets Sinn

touring black squatter camps on the eve of a ruling party congress, told his poorest supporters Friday his government has begun improving their lives. "I walked around and I

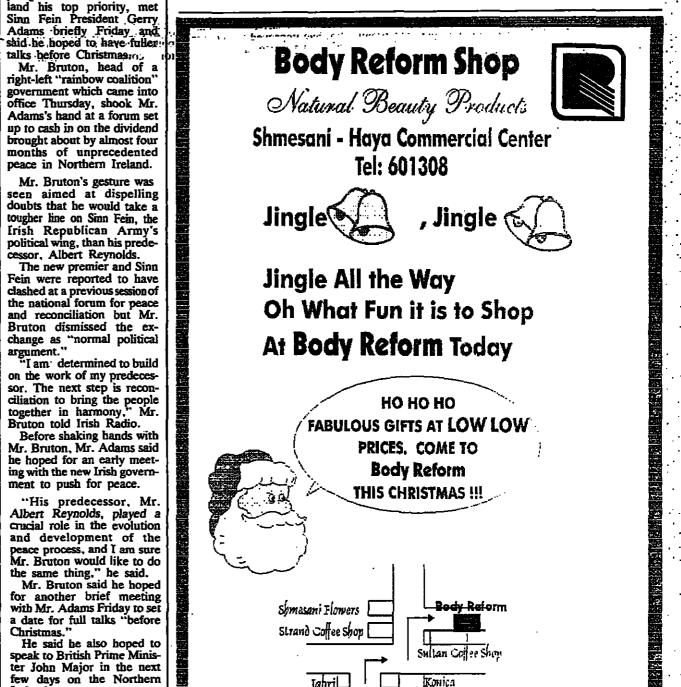
smelled poverty," Mr. Mandela told supporters in Namibia squatter settlement out-

Saturday opens its first Congress since taking power in historic elections last April.

"Before the election we promised you that we want a better life for all of you. We promised you houses, schools, hospitals and clinics, tarred roads, running water and electricity," Mr. Mandela told a crowd of about 300

He said his government of. national unity had begun setting up structures to deliver .

on those promises but itwould take time. Mr. Mandela listed his government's achievements, among them feeding schemes for children, free medical care for pregnant women and fire education for children arting school in 1995.



Battle of the Bulge remembered on icy hilltop port of Antwerp, hoping to son Memorial on a hill out-BASTOGNE, Belgium (R)

- Gathered at a hilltop memorial swept by an icy wind, American veterans who faced Hittler's last great offensive in the west marked the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge Friday.

guts," NATO's commander in Europe, U.S. General

veterans, laid a wreath at the massive star-shaped Mardas-

side the town of Bastogne. The hills echoed with a 21-gun salute as 200 seated veterans, wrapped in blankets to keep the warm, looked

Weather conditions, with a freezing wind and drizzle, were similar to those on Dec. 16, 1994 when the Germans used the bad weather and forested hills to launch their

"For those who fought here, living or dead, the torch of liberty has passed to our hands. Together we must nurture and sustain it," said Ms. Albright, who represented U.S. President Bill

cut allied forces in two. swarms of allied planes to

pound their armour. The battle was the bloodiest for U.S. forces in

man casualties, one-third of German veterans were not invited to the Bastogne ceremonies. But a handful of veterans from the German infantry were due to meet

Belgium later Friday. The billtop ceremony was the first of a day of activities in Bastogne, one of the focal

this time without Germans, later Friday. Six tanks and other army vehicles drove through Bastogne's main street and explosions and air raid sirens were heard once

Retired U.S. Lieutenant-General Harry Kinnard, an

for another brief meeting with Mr. Adams Friday to set a date for full talks "before Christmas." He said he also hoped to speak to British Prime Minister John Major in the next few days on the Northern

Ireland peace process.

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Sad to overlook reality

JORDAN WAS of course right in entering a reservation on the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Casablanca resolution pertaining to the Islamic holy shrines in Jerusalem for not noting this country's historic and distinct role in the Holy City and its Islamic places. As His Majesty King Hussein told the OIC summit a few days ago, these Islamic shrines "are a trust in our hands as we have rescued them with the blood of our sons in the 1948 war and we have constructed it three times on behalf of the Islamic nation. We will do our duty towards the shrines in the name of the nation until its status has been determined in an acceptable and appropriate manner."

This crystal clear Jordanian position unfortunately was not received with the necessary appreciation or recognition even though it is legitimate and sound on religious, historic and legal grounds. Instead of supporting the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement to work together on this point, the Casablanca declaration decided that the CIC should endeavour to assist the transfer of all authority and responsibility in east Jerusalem to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) which of course includes authority and responsibility over the Islamic holy shrines at a time when such a transfer of authority does not appear to be on the cards at least for the time being.

Against this backdrop, the Casablanca resolution on the holy places serves as a spoiling factor that can be exploited to undermine the only existing Arab or Islamic control over them. We in Jordan must therefore deal with the resolution as only a declaration that has no binding effect on the policy of the country, as the prime minister clearly stated vesterday. The final status of east Jerusalem will be the subject of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and will surely occupy centre stage when the final chapter in these peace talks is determined and agreed upon by the two parties. Meanwhile, no good service can be made by rocking the boat on an issue relevant to all Arabs and Muslims, especially when any attempt to interfere with it at this time will have no positive effect.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour discussed the outcome of the Casablanca Islamic conference saying that since the participating countries are in disarray. Muslim people should expect nothing to be achieved. No one expects the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to come to the aid of the Muslims in Bosnia or Afghanistan and end their sufferings, said Saleh Qallab. Some of the leaders taking part in the conference went there simply to declare their total opposition to all forms of Islamic extremism and others went to declare that they resort to any tool or measure to confront the great satan and Zionism and imperialism, said the writer. Some of the leaders went to the conference simply to attack those countries which are involved in the peace process and not to think of ways to save the Palestinians from their plight, added Qallab. He said none of the leaders was strong enough to suggest collective action to save the Bosnians or submit a plan to end the confict in Afghanistan or even to approach Russia over Chechenya. Indeed, no one in his right mind expects from the Islamic conference to do anything towards solving these chronic issues and there is no wonder that the conference, like others before it, has ended in failure.

A WRITER in Sawt Al Shaab daily praised the performznce of the Royal Jordanian (RJ) as a national institution that serves as a bridge linking Jordan with the outside world. Under all circumstances, even during the Gulf crisis when all other airlines refrained from carrying out operations in the region, RJ was alone serving as a bridge between the Middle East and the western world, transporting the stranded nationals from the Gulf, said Ahmad Dabbas. The writer said that now that the RI is being transformed into a private institution, or a shareholding entity, it does not negate its national character nor does it impede RJ's plans for expanding to reach all corners of the world. The writer said that the national airline will remain an important instrument for promoting the tourism industry in Jordan and serve as a very important national institution for Jordanians and all visitors to this country.

JORDANIAN PERSPECTIVE

By Dr. Musa Keilani

What weighs in the balance of human rights

UNDER THE patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, a seminar on rights and humanities took place in Amman between Dec. 10-12. It was done in cooperation with the Jordanian Institute of Diplomacy. The amazing surprise at the seminar was that the church lobby tried to dress up its own human rights agenda, though historically, it was the western church which gave legitimacy to all the constitutions that violated basic human rights. The hidden agenda of some participants was to extract a consensus from Muslim participants was to Muslim girls to marry from other faiths, under the title of freedom of choice. Moreover, the proselytising participants attempted to wrench out from Muslims the right to apostasy, under the title of freedom of opinion. To support Salman Rushdie and Taslima Nasreen, the church lobby's hidden agenda tried to emphasise and distort the freedom

of expression and literary creativity.

The last three decades of the twentieth century witnessed a lot of tension and misperception between the Muslim World and the West. The issue of human rights seems to some Arabs as the "whip" with which Muslims are to be

The historical legacy of both sides is infused with selective memories which frustrates and impedes mutual understanding.

The historical experience of the West has become

universally predominant, both politically and economically, due to the technological, scientific advances.

Earlier civilisations remained mainly confined to the geographical limits of their continental boundaries as seen in Judeo-Christian, Graeco-Roman, Chinese, Islamic and

Slavic Orthodox civilisations.

I believe there are no fundamental contradictions between the ethical principles of human rights in the West and the Islamic concept of human rights in the Arab civilisation. The common potential of both can be translated and actualised in a constructive way if real efforts and genuine will are devoted to implement it. The bridges of common understanding are:

a) The rights of a group, b) the rights of an individual, c) the rights of resident aliens.

It is to be admitted that the concept of national liberation from foreign rule traces its roots to the Germanic tradition of the "nation and its rights" following the Napoleonic wars, the French revolution, and the impact of the Magna Carta of 1215. Pakistani Muslim nationalism, the young Turk movement and others were influenced by the Western

The horrors of the two world wars resulted in so many tragedies for refugees and displaced people that they led to President Woodrow Wilson's 14 points in 1918, the U.N. Charter in 1945, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and many other statements which remained an expression of wishful thinking with no mechanism for

Moreover, the European Convention on Human Rights, in November 1950, lacked the mechanism to include migrant workers as seen in the proceedings of the European Court of Human Rights.

The European declaration emphasised the civil and political rights to the exclusion of the economic and social dimension which the U.N. stressed.

There is a widespread perception that international power politics raises the issue of civil and political rights in Arab countries as a tool of pressure, while many Western advocates see the economic and social rights issue being used as a cover in Muslim countries when political and civil rights are violated.

In the West, the tradition of human rights has been recently compared to two millennia of Christian history. The ideals of religions have often been contradicted by

In the West, the origins of today's human rights agenda are to be found in opposition to religious institutions or others given legitimacy by religion. Only when their power base was broken, the scriptural and revealed foundation of an excellent human rights agenda was discovered.

Though the principles, of human rights in the West are in total harmony with the fundamental concepts of human rights in Islam, there are certain differences we have to note if we want to search for a common ground for

understanding and cooperation.

It took several decades for the town people, lords and peasants to wrench out their rights in 1215 in Britain. The same applied to France, Germany and other European

In Islam, such a gradual evolution did not take place. It was just a direct Koranic verse which put an end to all aspects of discrimination according to colour or race. It was just one Koranic verse which emphasised the equality between a former slave and a bedouin sheikh. Islam, in one Sura (chapter), put an end to any denial of human rights due to race, language, colour, faith or gender.

But in the West, it was the feudal classes of 13th century

England which raised the claims to their rights. It was the 'ancient regime" in France which sided with the American revolution and its Declaration of Independence and Human Rights in 1776.

The colonial powers early this century, camouflaged their imperial designs in the Wilsonian Nation State Language of the mandate.

By using the language of the human rights discourse many people here fear that this is another successor to the Wilsonian precedent of the language of the mandate.

The trend is to emphasise the political rather than the economic human rights as one issue. But to stress on the

civil rather than the social rights is another issue.

The general perception is that human rights in the West are exclusively for their own citizens and do not extend to other nations of different race or creed.

The Vienna conference on human rights, in the autumn of 1993, did not end the sufferings of Muslim Bosnians. Had those thousands of Bosnians been hundreds of Jews, the whole Western world would have put an end to the acts

The 1945 Charter of the United Nations refers in its preamble "to fundamental human rights and the equal rights of men and women, and of nations large and small." But three years later, the Arab Palestinians were not considered a nation to have their own country. Instead their identity was usurped and their families evicted from their ancestral homeland. There was no cry in the West to

protect their human rights.

Moreover, the mortality rate among the Iraqi children under five has become 11 times more than during the pre-sanctions time due to lack of nutritional and medical care. But the Western public opinion did not sympathise,

using the false pretext of punishing Saddam Hussein: Had those 52,000 Iraqi children under the age of five been New Yorkers or English, the whole philosophy of human rights would have been enacted.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Supply and demand should govern prices

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

The local press in the past week gave prominence to domestic issues, the Casablanca Islamic conference. the Middle East and the

situation in Chechenya. Tackling the soaring prices of commodities in the Jordanian market, Hani Saoudi, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that the rising prices and the soaring cost of living is intolerable, noting that the limited-income groups were mainly feeling the brunt.

The rise in price of basic foodstuff by even one single fils can be hard on these groups and they have all the right to raise their voices in complaint, said the writer.

The problem lies with the absolute control over the prices by the Ministry of Supply which for instance is preventing the dairy companies from raising the price of their products when they continue to claim they are operating at a loss, said the writer.

He said that central control of prices is an obsolete policy which led to the impoverishment of the former Soviet Union. The writer suggests that prices be allowed to be floated and be decided by the force of supply and demand, provided that this happens in a free market where no particular group is given the right to monopolise certain commodities.

Shafiq Obediat, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, dwelt on the same topic by calling on the government to follow the example of advanced nations by raising the wages of workers in accordance with the rise in the price index of various commodities. The writer said in Jordan there exists no specific system to measure the rise in prices nor to allow living allowances to help the limited-income groups to cope with the

The current sogring

prices of every commodity are turning the limitedincome groups into very poor people facing want and poverty every day, said the writer.

A columnist in Al Dustour urged the Ministry of Supply to control the prices of basic commodities, including vegetables, and prevent manipulations and profiteering on the part of

Mohammad Daoud said that as there is no specific system for determining the prices, the merchants feel that they have a free hand and sell their products at exorbitant prices. It is not enough for the ministry to only limit the prices, it is equally important to send out teams and ensure that the rules are repsected, added the writer.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily criticised the authorities concerned with gas cylinder warehouses for allowing them to be located close to residential areas.

Referring to the explosion that destroyed 1,000 gas cylinders which were much in need by the public. Samir Nayfeh said that the Civil Defence Department should be more vigilant and authorised to have the final say in this matter and so avoid tragedies. The explosion could have had very dangerous results had the incident not been immediately reported and firefighters called to the scene immediately, he said.

Mohammad Subeihi dwelt on the same topic, urging the civil defence to take precautionary measures to protect the public's safety and the lives of citizens. The writer said that many of the cylinders containing the dangerous gas are rusty and need replacement, but are stil sold to the public, endangering lives. He also accused the distributors of gas cylinders of stealing part of the contents before selling them to

that stricter measures be taken in this regard. Tareq Masarweh, a col-

umnist in Al Ra'i, referred to the collapse of one of the newly finished buildings in Amman, accusing the concerned government departments of neglecting their duty. The writer said that never in the history of Jordan was it heard of a building collapsing. The incident terrified the public and cast doubt about the soundness of the construction system in the country. Indeed, the public is beginning to de-spair with the official institutions, not only because of the collapse of the building, but also in view of the rising level of crime and murders and the reported contamination of foodstuff sold to the public.

Fand Fanek, an economist writing in Al Ra'i daily, bitterly criticised the World Bank for its recent report in which it recommended that no investments be made in Jordan until the country has paid back its foreign debts. The writer said that the report also noted that even if the debts are written off, the country would be facing economic difficulties after 1997.

He said that such talk clearly discourages the investors and tends to adversly affect development. The writer also criticsed

the report for calling for the transformation of the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan into towns and villages, a clear service to Israel which adamantly refuses the repatriation of the displaced people to their lawful homeland.

Referring to the Casablanca Summit, Al Ra'i daily said that His Majesty King Hussein has made it clear that Jordan is not competing with any party over the city, but clearly cares for the holy shrines until a final solution to the status of the Holy City has been reached.

The paper said that Jordan had all the right to nuncus reconstions about

the final statement issued by the Organisation of Islamic Conference because it ignored the traditional and historical role of Jordan towards the Islamic places over the past decades.

Taher Adwan, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that instead of serving as a forum for reconciliation, the Casablanca summit proved to be a venue for consecrating hostilities among Islamic countries.

The summit called for

the Islamic regimes to crack down on the Islamist groups which are fighting injustice caused by occupation and aggression, and thusit started a war be-tween the Islamist groups and the Islamic regimes which eventually serve world Zionism and Israel.

Al Dustour said that the Casablanca summit would remain meaningless unless its decisions concerning Afghanistan, Bosnia and Iraq are put into force. The 52 countries which issued the resolutions will be required to take practical action in ending the bloodshed in Afghanistan, the Serbian aggression on Bosnia and lift the sanctions on Iraq, said the daily.

Without the implementation of these resolutions, the Organisation of Islamic Conference would remain a futile organisation, said the

Tareq Masraweh said

Israel's refusal to pave the ground for elections in the Palestinian lands constitutes a retreat from the Osio agreement. The wrtier, in Al Ra'i daily, said that abandoning the Oslo and Cairo agreements would mean that Israel would not withdraw its forces from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and would allow the Jewish settlers to continue committing their crimes against the Palestinians. The writer said that Israel was using the peace treaties with the Arabs as traps prior to imposing their will on the Arab countries.

EU poised for major changes in the new year

By Jeremy Gaunt

BRUSSELS -- The European Union faces major changes next year as it welcomes in three countries, appoints a brand new executive and loses two of the men who have shaped Europe's direction for more than a decade.

In some ways, the EU will never be the same again. "It is a big question mark for everybody," said one

Brussels-based official. Austria, Sweden and Finland will raise the EU's numbers to 15 when they enter on Jan. 1 following successful referendums earlier this year. Their presence will make the union bigger and richer

and stretch its boundaries as far north as the Arctic Circle and as far east as Russia. Jacques Santer, the lowprofile prime minister of Lux-

embourg, will take over an enlarged, 20-member European commission, more than half of them new.

"Lots of people with... lots of political thinking behind them," said one EU diplomat of the new EU executive that will include the likes of former French Prime Minister Edith Cresson and former British Labour Party leader Neil Kinnoch.

Mr. Santer will replace Jacques Delors, the high-profile architect of Europe's single market and a pioneer of economic and monetary union who is leaving after 10 years in the post.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl said last week Mr. Delots had been the "soul of the (European) enterprise for a decade."

It is doubtful whether Mr. Santer, a pragmatist to Delors' philosopher king, either could or would want to fill the role.

Also leaving the EU stage is Francois Mitterrand who is retiring after 14 years as president of France. With Mr. Kohl, Mr. Mitterrand has called many of the shots in three changes has set EU

diplomats and officials wondering about what is to come and how the changing of the guard will effect the EU's 1996 interreview the role and power of EU institutions.

But that is over the long haul. In the short term, there is widespread consensus that it is the arrival of the three new countries that will bring the most immediate, and most noticeable, change. In statistical terms, they will lift the EU population by

nearly 22 million to close to 370 million and increase its gross domestic product by between seven and eight per

They will also push the EU further eastwards, where preparations to incorporate former communist countries into the union is already under way.

EU diplomats and officials say, however, the real impact of the newcomers - particularly the Nordic ones - will be in the policies they bring to EU meetings.

"Their vote will be for maximum transparency, for budget discipline," said one diplomat, referring to the Nordic countries' penchant

for rigourous openness. Sweden and Finland are expected to join forces with northern countries as free

traders. Together, the diplomat said, Germany, Britain, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Finland will have enough votes in EU decision-making meetings to block anti-dumping measures they think protectionist.

The two Nordic countries, possibly with Austria too, are also expected to fight hard for stringent environmental standards in the union.

"There is one headline about the environment policy of the union every day in every Nordic country," said an EU

They will also push welfare-oriented social policies, diplomats say, and, in Sweden's case, argue for a reform of the EU's highly subsidised agricultural sys-

While a certain amount is known about what the newcomers will bring, the other changes raise more questions than they answer.

The new commission, for example, contains a number of high-ranking and accom-plished politicians likely to want to make their mark. Mr. Santer, however, com-

es from within a group of EU leaders known to want to rein Europe over the past decade. In the executive that Mr. The combination of the Delors turned into the closest thing to an EU government.
The absence of Mr. Delors and Mr. Mitterrand from the European scene, meanwhile.

may have far more long-term implications for the EU than the new commission. With Mr. Delors eschewing a run for the French

presidency, the new French leader will now almost certainly pay more heed to Eurosceptics within the coun-

try.

That would be a sea change for the European Union as

LETTERS

Awareness, public debate needed

To the Editor:

With great interest I have followed the responses to your article on sexual harassment of Nov. 22. This is an issue which has been accepted quietly for too long in Jordan, and it is good to see that people feel strongly about it. However, there was occasionally the implication that women are in a way responsible for the sexual harassment they are subject to. In particular, Hassan Tayyem in his letter "We are all responsible" (Jordan Times Dec. 13, 1994) writes that "a great number of women are not conservative or at least moderate in their attire, appearance, hair style and quantity and quality of perfumes" which he says invites harassment.

I would just like to point out that this way of thinking

blames the victim for the crime. Just like saying that a woman deserved to be raped because "she asked for it." The statistics on incest and the rape of children and women over the of 70 should speak for themselves.

Sexual harassment is a form of verbal and mental rape which has nothing to do with the receiver, but only with the wish of the offender to debase, insult and offend someone who is perceived to be in a more vulnerable position. Men who sexually harass women are insecure and often feel powerless and weak. Just like exhibitionists, they revel in the shock and anger of their victims, which makes them feel powerful for a moment and offers them a cheap thrill. Verbal harassment also reflects the deep-felt resentments of a patriarchal society towards women who are infiltrating what used to be male-dominated terrain, such as the university, the work place, and even the street! It does not matter what a woman wears or does not wear because her

mere presence is enough to initiate harassment.

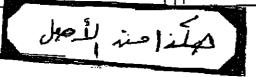
I would also like to refer to Mr. Tayyem's statement that we are not in other liberal countries who consider sexual harassment something normal.'

From my experience in living in "liberal" countries, which usually condemn sexual harassment in all its forms and have strong laws against it, I can say that I have never been harassed or felt uncomfortable in a public place, in any of those places, the way I feel uncomfortable stepping

out of the house in Jordan, my own home country.

I think this serious problem should be given the attention it deserves by the authorities. A public debate followed by an awareness campaign might uncover the reasons for this problem and help solve it. The women of Jordan would surely appreciate it.

> Cosima Hadidi. Amman.



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Castilla Hadidi.

Features

Violence returns, with a new label

By Tom Cohen The Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa - It happens quickly. Two taxi vans, the mode of transportation for most blacks, approach a bustling stand to collect commuters

waiting with sacks of goods. The driver of one vehicle, or perhaps a companion in the front seat, raises a rifle barrel or handgun, shots ring out. The other vehicle flees or crashes.

And quite often, someone

Taxi warfare has returned to South Africa, despite hope that bloodshed would wane with the end of apartheid after the first all-race election in April.

At least 166 people have died this year in attacks and assassinations linked to the taxi industry. The killings are reminiscent of the political bloodshed that claimed thousands of lives in the years before the vote.

In one of the worst attacks, gunmen in October fired on a crowd of commuters leaving a rally outside Cape Town, killing 11 people.

Just like the past, blacks are the prepetrators and targets, with assault rifles and handguns the weapons of choice. Arrests are rare.

Politicians and taxi officials blame socio-economic conditions instead of politics for the renewed carnage.

"The fact that this conflict over economics is resolved by a violent means tells a number of stories," said Lloyd Vogelman, director of the centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation. "People believe violence is still the best means to solve conflict."

Taxi-related violence has flared on and off for years in South Africa, spawned by an unregulated industry that mushroomed as millions of blacks moved from rural homelands to cities in search

of work. The minibus taxis, known as combis, carry 15 billion passengers a year while providing 300,000 jobs and earning more than half the money made by South Africa's gold mining industry.

Too many people are in the taxi business, said Frank van der Velde, the former mayor of Cape Town who has mediated several local taxi dis-

"It's one that rapidly started bringing money into the community

That created conditions for conflict "between those trying to break into the industry and those trying to hold their piece of the pie," he In addition, taxi associations became affiliated with

political groups to ply routes to areas with distinct political ties. Attacks on taxi vans in the years before the election were often considered politically motivated. The latest wave of violence, with scores of people dying in a string of attacks

and clashes throughout the country since July, seems especially severe after the relative peace of the preceding James Mafunya, vice chairman of the Cape Organisation for the Democratic Taxi Association, said the violence

only hurts the industry because commuters turn to buses and trains instead. Mr. Mafunya's association has clashed with members who split off to form another group. The splinter group wanted access to a new, modern taxi stand built by the city. Mr. Mafunya's association said only taxis with city

permits — meaning only its

members - should be

allowed to use the taxi stand. "It's like people who favour birth control, they're already born," said Allan Dolby, the deputy city administrator. "Those that are pirates want to see deregulation, with market forces determining who comes into the industry

Police say gangs are trying to muscle out competition by hiring hit men to kill oppo-

"The taxi industry is definitely hiring assassins," Mr. Vogelman said, noting similarities between the taxi violence and political clashes of the past. "You may even find that some individuals become dependent on the conflict, depending on people hiring

Imam sees greater understanding of Islam in U.S. military

By Joanne L. Nix U.S. Information Agency

WASHINGTON - It has been one year since Captain Abdul Rasheed Mohammad was commissioned an imam in the U.S. army. Today, the young religious leader is still optimistic about the future of slam in the West.

His commission, he said, a

direct result of a growing understanding of Islam by the American military establishment. And he promised that his appointment last December at Fort Brag, North Carolina, was "only a beginning" in his campaign to foster awareness of Islam throughout the U.S. armed forces. In a recent interview with USIA, Imam Mohammad emphasised that his chief aim is this year is to "become a good chaplain. Despite the fact the Islamic World is glorifying my (appointment) as the first Muslim chaplain," he said, "the reality is that I

ery man, woman and child in my unit." May 12-25, marked the high point of Capt. Mohammad's first year as chaplain. He performed the Haj. "I wish I could tell you all of it,"

am here to be an army family

chaplain. The majority of the

people aren't Muslims. My

prime responsibility is to ev-

he said in an attemp to explain what the trip had meant to him. "It was the most fantastic experience of my life. I had the opportunity to pray at the holy Kaba (in Mecca) and the Prophet's Mosque (in Medina) and saw people (from) all over the world. Spiritually it was very

During his trip, Capt. Mohammad was invited by the Muslim World League to a banquet in Mina were he met King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, the presidents of Cameroon and Ghana and other dignitaries. He also toured important holy sites in Mina, Mecca and Medina. The appointment of a Mus-

lim military chaplain marks the first time a non-Judeo-Christian faith group has been represented in the U.S. Army. In the Navy, Legal-man First Class Malik Noel is set to become its first Islamic chaplain after finishing his current course of training next year and American Buddhists are currently searching for a candidate to serve their first chaplain.

According to the Armed Forces Chaplain Board, the total number of Muslims in the military is hard to determine because enlistees are not required to list their religious preference. But the American Muslim Council, which endorsed the candidacy of Chaplain Mohammad, esetimates that there are more than 10,000.

Imam Mohammad noted that the presence of Mulsims in the U.S. armed forces increased following the Gulf war after U.S. service mem-bers stationed in the Middle East worked alongside Egyptian, Saudi and other Muslim coalition forces. And, he said, many Americans, him-self included, became Muslims after they were inspired by the teachings of Malcolm X, the American Muslim the American Muslim leader of the early 1960s and by the 1992 biographical film, "Malcolm X." directed by Spike Lee.

Imam Mohammad expressed hope that now an Islamic chaplain is part of the milit-ary system, "hopefully more Muslims will come forward and openly acknowledge their faith." In order to reach out to both committed Muslims and service members who have a desire to learn the religion, Imam Mohammad contacted Islamic religious groups in the U.S., Egypt and Saudi Arabia to obtain conies of the Koran as well as pamphlets and books in English about Islam.

He also formed links with

Muslims stationed in remote areas. Those contact people provide information to local Muslim and non-Muslim residents, distribute Islamic literature and inform him on the needs of Muslim service members. "What we have to do is make sure that every strategic location where the army has troops, such as Korea, has a contact per-son," Imam Mohammad

The chaplain admitted that although he has made real progress, there is still much that needs to be done. Some of the concerns he still must address are matters of dietary regulations, prayers and religious observances.

Concerning dietary laws, Imam Mohammad was pleased to report that the Department of Defence agreed to provide vegetarian MREs (Meals Ready to Eat) for Muslim troops in Haiti. He said that following its research on multi-faith rations, "the military is now providing multi-faith vegetarian products and vendors from private industry are also considering the distribution of "halal" meals for observant Muslim service members worldwide.

Asked about Muslim women in the Armed Forces who wish to follow the tradi-

tional female Islamic dress prayer and the two. Eid sercode inlending the "hejab." In addition, Capt. Moham-Mohammad replied: American Muslim Council is mad reported that he is occasionally invited to explain working on that issue. I have

referred that matter to them how Islam is perceived. His chief topics, he says, are "the stereotyping that continues (and) it will have to go up through the Department of Defence. Wearing the "he-(in) the western press (and) jab" is not mandatory," he raising awareness among service members of the plight of Muslims throughout the explained, "but it is a symbol of Muslim identity and sends a unified message (to nonworld, particularly in Bosnia Muslims) in the armed serand Somalia." Chaplain Mohammad vices. As long as it does not

holds a Bachelor of Science (impede work, women) can wear it." degree in Anthropology from One of Capt. Mohammad's New York State University, most ambitious goals is to establish suitable sites for and two Master's degrees one in Counseling Education from San Diego State University, California, and one worship by Muslims on U.S. army installations. He exin Social Work from the Uniplained that although the armed forces do not build versity of Michigan. individual religious structures In 1982 he enlisted in the in order to preserve religious equality, "the American Muslim Council has (agreed)

army has a chaplain's assistant and has also worked as a chaplain with Muslim populations in the New York State Department of Correctional Services. After he completed his

training at the army's chaplain's School at for Monmouth. New Jersey, Capt. Mohammad was stationed with his family at Fort Lee, Virginia. In his current military assignment, he councils and conducts religious services for more than 100 Mus-

Turkey fights odds to clean up with natural gas

By Suna Erdem Reuter

ANKARA — Faced with rising pollution as winter coal fires begin to burn, Turkey's campaign to spread natural gas usage is being slowed by

high costs and a lack of focus. The need for cleaner energy is real. On Nov. 29, Istanbul, home to 10 million people, was so choked with smog it ordered coal heating turned

off in homes and offices. But Turkey's recent economic crisis, which saw the lira plunge against foreign currencies and forced a national belt tightening, has seriously clouded efforts to clean up by driving pinched consumers away from costly conversions

"Natural gas had to be brought here as pollution was

becoming unbearable — but because installation is expensive people are shying away and turning to cheap, bad quality coal," said Aysel Atimtay, specialist in air pollution at Ankara's Middle East Technical University.

It costs about \$500 to convert to natural gas in the capital of Ankara. The average monthly wage is \$195. Officials at the state pipe-

line company Botas, which buys and transports natural gas, said austerity had also hit "At the moment our hands

are a bit tied - we get no money from the state after the austerity measures." said one Botas official. "We have also lost about \$1.5 billion in four years since the oil line from Iraq was closed after the Gulf war.

Other officials said Botas still had enough turnover to invest, albeit less than hoped. They instead urged better

organisation of municipal bodies and state firms and said inconsistency and a short-term attitude in successive administrations had also played their part in slowing conversion from coal to gas.

Natural gas reaches households in three cities in Turkey and is supplied to industry in foш.

The capital of Ankara, once covered in a black shadow of smog each winter, was cleaned up between 1989 and 1993, when Deputy Prime Minister Murat Karayalcin was-mayor....

With some 450,000 households linked up to the network, the drive in Ankara, which has about 700,000 households all told, has lost impetus. Its new mayor protests at heavy debt incurred under Karayalcin.

But it is in Istanbul where

the need is now most pressing. Since 1987, Istanbul Municipality's Natural Gas Department (IGDAS) has been trying to persuade people to switch. IGDAS deputy head fuat

Sengul said 600,000 Istanbul households, about a quarter of the total, had natural gas lines at their doorsteps — but only 260,000 had booked up. Those not scared off by

installation costs, fear prices, currently lower than for other fuels, may rise swiftly as gas is imported and costs are linked to an ever-rising dol-

"They are also afraid that Russia might cut off gas. leaving them without heating," said a Botas onicial.
"We guarantee that won't happen, but they take some persuading.

to using the (post) chapel as

a multi-faith facility. As long

as the chapel can be used for

prayers in the form they are

performed (by Muslims), it

The imam has been invited

to discuss Ramadan, Islam's

holiest month, at an in-

service training session at Fort Bragg in January. He

also plans to train chaplain:

assistants to set up various

services including the Jumaah

will be acceptable."

On Nov. 30, Russian natural gas supplies to Turkey via Ukraine were stopped for a day when Kiev tapped the pipeline to increase its share. Botas met supplies from its liquefied natural gas depots. The flow from Russia re-

sumed the next day. Botas is continuing talks to buy 40 billion cubic metres of natural gas annually from countries in the region by 2010, compared with the current six billion cubic metres from Russia.

Engineers and Botas officials say the constant flow of migrants from rural areas into shanty towns around Ankara and Istanbul is also a huge problem and upsets

"Shanty towns just add to the burden - you can't even get into the narrow alleys to lay pipes," a Botas official

"The problem in Istanbui is very hard to tackle because each year the population increases by 500,000," said Sengul.

IGDAS held a campaign in August and September offering a 20 per cent reduction and 100 cubic metres of natural gas, a month's supply, free to people who converted

to gas in that period. It is now offering 250 cubic metres free to those converting in line with a recent demand from Istanbul governorate that all industrial and trade facilities, plus blocks of flats with central heating, turn to gas by the end of



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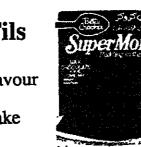
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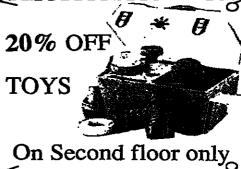


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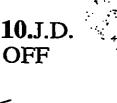


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Saudi Arabia, billions in debt, considers swap for bonds

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia is considering converting debts to bonds or other paper to clear billions of dollars in arrears to contractors and suppliers, financial sources

have said "The government is looking to clear those (arrears) up in one fell swoop," a banker

The amount involved is billions of dollars - one estimate was about \$5 billion -which the government would not be able to come up with easily from normal revenues when it is trying to balance the budget and avoid falling further behind.

Saudi Arabia is many months behind in payments to some contractors, causing painful cash crunches and worries for some foreign workers, including doctors and nurses, the sources said.

Bankers said the Saudi government and its public sector companies and agencies have accumulated total debt of close to \$85 billion about 70 per cent of gross domestic product.

They said that is not far out of line by international standards but a hug jump from about 16 per cent in 1988. The 1990-91 Gulf war cost

the government \$55 billion, drawing down assets and pushing up the debt load.

With the boost in oil prices in the second half of 1994 some fairly large payments to contractors have been possi-

But to some companies the government was only up to date until end-1993 and to others possibly not even that current, the bankers said. The payment delays were not uniform across all ministries and to all firms, with some delays much shorter.

The initiative to securitise debt through converting to paper appears to have come primarily from banks, eager to apply techniques applied in many Western economies to try to solve problems of clients struggling to keep current on loan payments.

The sources said the authorities have made no commitment at all to securitise their arrears, and because of the complexity of doing so it would probably take a time to put in place.

"It is at a very embryonic stage," one source said.
They point out that Saudi Arabia's capital market is fledgling. Little trade takes place in development bonds, with banks tending to hold them to their two-to-five year maturities.

"I really question whether it's do-able," said one banker, adding that a trading environment would be needed where whatever securities are created can be traded back and forth.

In the absence of an active secondary market, if a company were given develop-ment bonds, he pointed out, it might still be short of cash even if bonds would at least guarantee interest.

Another believed it would be possible for the banks to buy the security from the company, even if there were no developed bond market. thus providing liquidity to the company and placing its loan portfolio on a more solid footing.

One route other than giving government bonds would be simply to guarantee payment by a certain date, which would make the receivables much more attractive to the banks than they are now.

"If the government could find a way to guarantee pay-Bank in Rivadh. ments by a specific date, it would enable the banks to

purchase receivables from their customers." he said.

Meanwhile, the determination of cash-strapped Saudi Arabia to cut spending and end years of government financial profligacy has become clear in the run-up to its 1995 budget, financial analysts have said.

The latest confirmation came in a presentation to King Fand by Governor Hamad Saud Al Sayyari of the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency — the central bank - speaking of the need for 'sacrifices and additional efforts in the short term."

Coming four days after the king himself spoke of budget cuts, the remarks reinforced the impression that Saudi Arabia was set on getting a grip on its finances after more than a decade of budget deficits, the anlaysts said.

"It reconfirms that this government clearly has the capacity to exert fiscal discipline and they will exert this to the degree required to balance the budget." said Kevin Taecker, chief economist at Saudi American

The precise details of the 1995 budget are not due to be gap of several billion dollars

revealed before Dec. 31, but it has now become clear that further cuts in some areas are expected and the government will also seek to increase its revenue.

"I think the main intention is to prepare the people for another difficult year in 1995. think it's a good thing," a Western diplomat commented. "It's a sign the Saudis are faming upto their problems."

Already pressure has been taken off the Saudi riyal, which speculators have frequently attacked on the assumption that weak oil revenues would force the govemment to devalue it.

The spot riyal has strengthened and some of the premium of rival interbank deposit rates over comparable dollar levels has declined as operators reduced their long dollar positions since the king's remarks.

Some big positions against the rival have been unwound (liquidated)." a banker noted.

The extra effort in 1995 will be required for two reasons, analysts say,

First, there appears to be a

spending and revenues in 1994 despite the goal of a balanced budget. Second, discipline will be

though much reduced

- between actual

from 1993's estimated \$12 bil-

needed to counter natural spending rises in some areas. Interest payments, for example, will be higher due to the global rise in rates. And even if the wage structure is frozen, wages still rise as employees are promoted.

One banker calculated the budget at the projected spending levels for 1994 could be balanced with an average price of North Sea benchmark brent crude at \$17 a barrel. So far this year Brent has averaged a little less than the current \$15.90.

Economists are divided on the chances of Brent improving to an average of \$17 next year, some pointing to OPEC's decision to maintain output despite higher demand but others pointing to the spectre of Iraq eventually returning to the market.

But they say any doubts about oil revenue show the value of turning to other sources such as higher utility

Japan's per capita GDP world's highest in 1993

It rose to \$33,764 per head

The figure, per capits gross domestic product (GDP), was the highest among the 25

The yen's strength boosted the value of dollar-based per

total output of goods and services minus net income from overseas production,

rose to \$4.21 trillion in 1993 from \$3.66 trillion in 1992, ranking second only to the United States among OECD

Meanwhile, the combined value of Japan's visible and financial assets rebounded in . 1993 after falling in 1992, the

Gross asset value totalled 6,981 trillion yen (\$69.81 trillion) at the end of 1993, up 0.8 per cent from a year carlier, it said.

The value of Japan's land assets continued to fall sharply in 1993, although that of stock assets posted the first

1980k.

Clinton offers middle class a 'bill of rights'

WASHINGTON (R) — Bill Clinton fought to reinvigorate his presidency Thursday with a \$60 billion tax-cut plan, part of "a middle-class bill of rights" aimed at U.S. voters who deserted his Democrats in droves in elec-

nons last month. In a televised speech designed to portray him as the true champion of working Americans and outflank the new Republican majority in Congress, Democrat Clinton proposed a package of tax breaks for families with annual incomes of up to \$120,000 to help offset childrearing, college tuition. home-buying and catastrophic medical expenses.

"More jobs aren't enough. We have to raise incomes.' he said. "I challenge the new Congress to work with me to enact the middle class bill of

Mr. Clinton said the tax cuts in his four-point-plan speech - as the president

DAR ES SALAAM (R) — An aid ban imposed on Tan-

zania by leading donors has

hit its coffers so hard the

reformist government has

been forced to borrow \$40

million from commercial

banks, a minister has said.

Finance Minister Jakaya

Kikwete told Reuters in an

interview the borrowing had

in turn fuelled inflation and

thrown the East African

country's economic recovery

"We are off track. The

government's performance year. Other Western donors

programme out of gear.

would be paid through major reductions in five federal agencies and a two-year extension of a freeze on discretionary government spending

now set to expire in 1998. "I know some people just want to cut the government blindly, and I know that's popular now," he said in an obvious reference to his Republican opponents. "But I won't do it. I want a leaner. not meaner, government."

In a 10-minute speech from the Oval Office, sounding sombre and looking crisply formal in a dark blue suit. Mr. Clinton insisted that he would brush aside 1996 presidential reelection worries because "that's in your

"My rule for the next two vears will be, country first and politics-as-usual dead last," he stressed.

While taxes and economics were the subject of the

was not good in the last three months," the minister said

shortly before he left for

Paris to attend a donors' con-

Mr. Kikwete, 45, was re-

ferring to a freeze of up to

\$35 million in balance of pay-

ments support imposed last

month by Finland, Sweden

and Norway, Tanzania's

The three countries cited

concern at official reports

that rampant tax evasion cost

the country \$125 million last

leading traditional donors.

sultative group meeting.

Tanzania, hit by aid freeze, in financial crisis

tried to catch up with the Republicans and even independent-minded Democrats on the tax-cut issue - politics and reelection were the unspoken heart of it.

Mr. Clinton's presidency is in serious trouble, as witness the stunning Republican sweep of both houses of Congress and most state govemorships in the Nov. 8 elections. Recent opinion polls show Mr. Clinton's job ratings slumping below a 40 per cent approval tate.

The timing alone - a sobre presidential address promted by no particular external crisis on the verge of the Christmas holiday underscored the urgency of the speech. Accordingly. nationwide curiosity was high on how Mr. Clinton would fare and whether he could start righting himself.

"It's what he had to do to _ reshape the debate on terms

followed suit and withheld

undisclosed amounts of dol-

Tanzania launched an in-

vestigation into the evasion,

fired the senior civil servant

in charge of revenue and

transferred former finance

minister Kighoma Malima to

a less important portfolio in a

bid to appease the donors

up to \$800 million.

who underwrite annual aid of

action by President Ali Has-

san Mwinyi will only become

clear at the Paris meeting

How donors view the latest

lars in badly-needed aid.

together and really focus his resources ... (on) restoring the American dream," said Al From, president of the centrist Democratic Leadership Council.

But the Republicans said Mr. Clinton's plan looked much like theirs, and pledged to work with him to enact legislation only if his new position was based on "real conviction.

"If the president's new position tonight represents a real change of heart, we say: welcome aboard," said Fred Thompson, the new Republican senator from Tennessee swept into office on the anti-Democrat tide, Mr. Thompson gave the televised Republican response to Mr.

The centrepiece of Mr. Chinton's tax cut plan was a provision that would let families with annual incomes of

during which time Tanzania's

economic conduct will come

Mr. Kikwete said he was

still investigating the tax eva-

sion racket and promised his

top priority at the ministry he

took control of last week

would be efficient tax collec-

He said he would review

"Maybe the structure is

the country's fiscal policies.

poor or maybe the tariffs are

too high to the extent that

they encourage evasion," he

under close scrutiny.

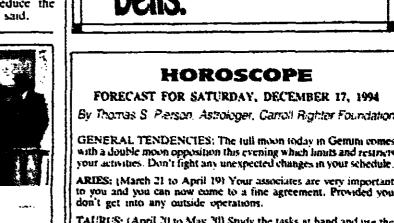
ep to \$124,300 write off up to \$10,000 in college tuition ex-

המוזמה בשנים הבשני It wold also give families with incomes of up to \$75,000. a year a tax credit of up to \$500 for each child under age 13. It would raise the income ceiling for tax-deferred individual refitement accounts to \$100,600 per family and allow penalty-free withdrawals for tuition payments, catastrophic medical expenses,

home purchases and care of elderly parents.

"We can pay for this middie class 'bill of rights' by continuing to reduce government spending, including subsidies to powerful in-terests ...," Mr. Clinton said.

Resulting savings would finance the five-year. Soil billion cost of the tax cuts and there would be \$16 billion left over to further reduce the federal deficit, he said.



Astra establishment for Commercial Agencies Thursday held a training course for the sales staff at cosmetics outlets and pharmacies, during which the marketing director. Fredy Fais, introduced a new perfume for men. "State-ment." from Etienne Aigner, one of the leading perfume producers. Etienne

reliable and full of life perfume.

ducts are well-received in Europe and the Middle

Astra Director General

Perfume for men launched

Aigner is specialised in producing perfumes, clothes,

accessories and leather

Mr. Fais said "Statement" is a unique, exciting.

He said that Aigner pro-East.

Imad Al Tayah welcomed Mr. Fais and thanked the audience for their coopera-

Peanuts







Andy Capp









Mutt'n'Jeff



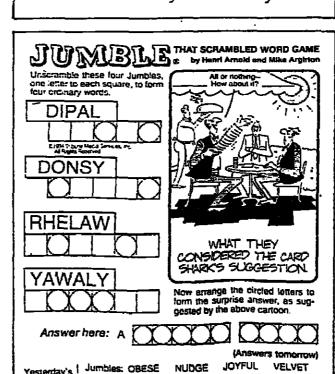








"Any fool can buy flowers from a store...but did anybody ever plant daisies in his belly button for you?"



Answer: What a cateleria offers — "SEE" FOOD

TOKYO (R) — Japan had the world's highest value of output per head of population for the first time in 1993. knocking Switzerland out of the top spot, a government agency said Friday.

from \$29,478 the previous year, the Economic Planning Agency (EPA) said in a re-

members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

capita GDP in 1993, the EPA said. Switzerland took second place with per capita GDP worth \$33,746.

Japan's nominal GDP, or

members, it said.

first slippage since the EPA started records in 1955.

year-on-year gain in four years, the EPA said.

Japan was hit hard by drastic falls in both land and stock assets in the early 1990s after the bursting of the bubble economy of inflated stock and land prices of the late

put Buy your Xmas presents from: iingle **※ DAJANI'S** in your bells. 6th Circle, Amman,

Amra Hotel Shops.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1994 By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The full moon today in Genum comes with a double moon opposition this evening which limits and restricts your activities. Don't fight any unexpected changes in your schedule. ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Your associates are very important

don't get into any outside operations. TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Study the tasks at hand and use the be more productive and harmonious,

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Delve into inexpensive entertainment only and you have a good time. Use good judgement in dealing with your male on any proposed activities.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Some changes at home could prove costly so think twice about making them. Entertain close friends at home tonight. LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You may find it difficult to get your activities completed today, but use care and all works out well. A

fellow associate has an idea which is good for you. VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Forget the financial restrictions for now and get repairs completed which are necessary to your

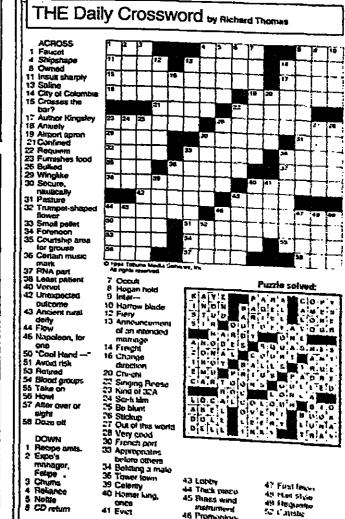
home and have more order around you. LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Your judgement about some fundamental affair is not apt to be good today, so get ideas and advice from others you can trust.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are anxious to gain data you need for a project but you cannot do so now. It is important that you are very kind with your mate. SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is not a good

day for handling monetary matters but fine for gaining personal aims, if you go after them. Enjoy good friends, CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Listen to the advice of experts today since your own judgment is not up to par. Attend some fine social event in the evening with your mate.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) New ideas come to your attention, but study them well before accepting the results. Don't let a private anxiety slow you down. PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Your hunches are not good now

so use your good judgement in whatever may turn up unexpectedly for you to gain your success. Birthstone of December: Turquoise - Zircon



per capita

from \$2 on trillion in 1993 from \$2 on trillion in 1993 from \$3 on trillion in 1993 from \$2 on trillion in 1993 from \$2 on trillion only to the members, it said.

Meanwhile, the combined salar of Lipsan, visible and tool after failing in 1993 after trilling in 1993 of the stappings since the EPA tricks described in 1955 PA.

traited records in 1955 and form at the end of 1993 full the cond of 1993 full traited in 1966 and 196 The value of Japan's land asserts continued to tall sharp it in today, although that of search wear search form in four years, the type and tapan was but hard by dragfor falls in least, and and stock after the carte book after

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RIPAR, DECEMBER 17, 194

The assembly who beginning to the early School of Marganian North interpation are a the least of the distribution of

Study the grands of the $\phi(f):= f_{1} \circ \nabla_{\operatorname{supp}(f), f(g)} \circ g_{1}$ أيران الأناب ومالأوط فطعه فالت

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() eat A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Ads for job opportunities outside Jordan must be approved by Ministry of Labour

usiness

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☆☆ Advertisements of work opportunities for Jordanians outside the Kingdom must first be approved by the Ministry of Labour to safe-guard the interests and rights of Jordanian workers. Advertisements from accredited embassies in the Kingdom çan be published without prior approval provided that a photocopy of the advertisemernt is sent to the ministry for record purposes (Al

☆☆ A committee from the Ministry of Labour, the General Association for Mechanics and Land Transport Workers will try to make a list of non-Jordanian drivers in a serious attempt to replace them with Jordanian drivers (Al Ra'i).

☆☆ Post and Communications Minister Hashem Al Dabbas urged his staff to speed up studies and prepare the specifications and terms for tenders which could be floated within the 1995 budget (Al Ra'i).

☆☆ Despite losing about 50 per cent of the capital, the Jordan Company for TV, Radio and Cinema Production has decided to continue operations. According to fun ture plans, the company intends to lease its quarters and equipment while continuing to produce a limited number of television shows hours. The company also plans to intensify its efforts to collect its financial dues from Arab strtions (Al Dustour).

★★ The industry and trade minister of the Czech Republic will arrive in Amman tomorrow on an official visit to the Kingdom. The minister, Vladimir Dlouhy, will Sunday conduct talks with Minister Rima Khalaf on possibilities of promoting economic cooperation between the two countries. Mr. Dlouhv. who will meet other Jordanian economic officials, will be accompanied by a group of Czech businessmen who will hold talks with the Jordanian business community to bolster commercial ties.

☆☆ The National Company for Aluminium Sheets is a public shareholding company under establishment. Founders are expected to sign the company's articles of association and the basic regulations Saturday. Chairman of the founding committee is Mohammad Haitham Al Nabulsi (Al Ra'i).

* Reliable government arces said that the Natural Resources Authority will be converted into a company in the first half of 1995. Under one proposal, a main company for petroleum and gas will be established with three small companies to be set up with affiliation to the main company. A second proposal suggests setting up a government-owned company for oil and gas exploration and another company for drilling and exploring for oil, gas and mineral resources which would have a large private sector capital (Al

☆☆ The Orphans Fund made a JD 10 million profit last year from trading at the Amman Financial Market. According to the Orphans' Fund director-general, investments in real estate stood at JD 10 million at the end of September 1994 (Sawt Al

Sunday, Dec. 25, is the last day of validity for the September-December coupons under which the pul sc can buy subsidised rice, sugar and milk. Merchants have to submit the coupons to the Ministry of Supply by Wednesday, Dec. 28 at the latest (Al Ra'i).

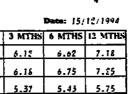
HHAN TIMANCIAL MARKET

NOUSING BANK CHAPTER ANGAN - SHORLEART					
CREATURED RESIDENT TRADUME ACTIVITY FOR THE PERSON (19/12/1974 - 14/12/1974)					
MERCLY PERFORM					
COMPANY'S MAKE	ACCING ACCING	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING JAJOE	PRICE	
ARRI BASS				I	
JORDAN SATIONAL WANT	291,960 91,150	164.250 4.550	4-510	4.410	
CAIRO ANGUN MANK BANK OF JORDAN	769,750 159,754	5 , 150	5.100	5.000	
KIDOLI EASI INVESTMENT BANK.	5,555	1.570	1.590	1.630	
INCOMPLIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK THE HOUSING BANK	49,058 48,8 19		2.990 5.540		
JORDAN TURKIT BANK JORDAN GULF BANK	176,560	3.030	3.000	3.010	
ARAS JORGAN INVESTMENT BANK	21,300 10,574	3,750	3-710		
JORDAN ISLANIC BASE UNION BASE FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	66,561 515	3.650	3.630 5.000	3.700 5.000	
BOSDIESS BARK	21,370	3.720	3.720	3.760	
JORDAN LEVESTERY & FINANCE MARK BRIT KLARL SAVINGLINVESTRENT FOR SUBSTRE	5.725 19,931				
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTIGATI ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORGAN	2,290,399	1.540	1.530	1.520	
PRILADIZATA INVESTMENT BASE.	4,600 86,326	3.830			
JORDAN INSURANCE ARABINA SEAS INSURANCE	2,550	3.400	3.400	3.490	
JERUSALEN TERUMANCE	57,600 4,461	1.910	4.200	6_200	
JORDAN FRINCH INSURANCE ARAB LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	5,315 3,640			2.520 2.600	
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	25,090	1.560	1.540	1.560	
JORDANIAS ELECTRIC POWER /SEN JORDAN HOTAL & TOURISM	144,687 1,345	1.520 5.750			
IRBID DISTRICT RESCURICTTY	2,613	1.008	0.750	0.350	
JOHNAN BINGS NINGSAL, VERICLES CHOURS PEDENATION	623 1,013				
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	20,323	5.190	5-170	5.210	
JOHNAN MATIONAL SHIPPING LINES MATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	14,469 18,164	3.220 2.500			
REAL HERE INVESTMENT	6,116	1.360	1.350	1.400	
Johnah Gulf Real estate levestrent Johnah iptermational tradisc centra	47,357 1,925	1.240			
MACHINARI ROUTP. MENTING & MACHINERANCE	11,336	0.820	2.790	0.400	
JORDAN FRESS POSSDATION / ALEX-I	140,915	11.790			
ARAB INTER. POR LEVERTHERT & EDUCATION	42,250	3.374	1.360	3.320	
JORDANIAN EXPAIRIATES INVESTIGNT NOLDING JORDAN TORACCO & CICAMETTES	7,610 5,984	1.390 20.600		20.500	
ATTRICED CORT. EXTERNAL MARGINGTIME	1,53	1.300	1.300	1.280	
THE JOSONE CERTAIN PACTORIES JOSONE PROSPRATE MINES	501,126 91,50	2.860	2-940	2.920 2.700	
THE ARAS POTEASK/HOM	10,01	2 5.720	5.720	5.450	
Johnan Petrolemi Sepinary Johnan Terring	. 17,899 4,140	9.260 3 7.400			
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	20,06	4.954	4.920	4.860	
THE JORDAN MORSTED MILLS ARAB PRADERCEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	37,290 355,80	8.100 7 5.870			
JORGAN CERANIC INDUSTRIES	2,343 8,183	6.190	6.000	6.100	
THE JORGAN PIPES HANDPACTURING JORDAN PAPER & CARDBOARD PACTORIES	1,37	3 2.910 4.180	4.200	4.200	
BAFTA INDUSTRIES	20,29	2.750	2.730	2.720 17.400	
DAR AL DANG DEVELOPHENT & DIVESTHENT ARAB INVESTIGENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADÉ	145,42	3 17.350 2 1.030	3 1.020	1.029	
ARAB ALIMINIUM INDUSTRI	32,46	7.000	7.000	7.100	
LIVESTOCE & POULTRY ARAB PAPER CONVERZING & TRADING	256,47 17,30	6 1.410	1,400	1.400	
MATICUAL STREE INDOSTRE	16,50	4.30	4.250	4.289	
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CREMICAL IMPESTALES JORDAN ROCEMOCL IMPOSTRIES	587,84 52,54	4 2.850 2 1.570		1.580	
UNIVERSAL CHENICAL INDUSTRIES	15,90	5 4.850	4.610	4.630	
Alabom terustries Jurgan industries & Harce/Jinco	1,45 129,40	9 6.500 7 0.830			
MATIONAL CABLE 4 WIRE HANDFACTURING	13,27	2 5.420	5.400	5.450	
JOHNAM STEPHO-CHEMICALS ARAB CENTER FOR PEARM. & CHEMICALS	31,72 15,41	6 2.820	2.800	2.800	
A Charles of Managerine by	8,10	1.850	1.600	1.900	
universi, konsen ijpostriss Jorgan industrial exsumers co.	37,39 28,66	1 4-230 7 2.690		4.290	

THE TRANSPORT ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (10/12/1994 - 14/12/1994

VERSIA REFORT				
COMPANY'S MARK	.JD VOLUME JPAD JIME	PREV. CLOSING PRICE		PRICE
CHERAL CHIMAL TRADING & STORAGE	13,149	0.860	0.870	
JORDAN TRADE PACILITIES	127,377			
MAKEA PRIVATE OFFICERATES	4,598			
OPTIFIED CO. FOR CHICANTETING LAND TRANS.	654,379			
ARAB FIRANCIAL DEVENTMENT	162,468			
ARAB FOOD & MEDICAL APPLIANCES	9,847			
MATIONAL CHICRIES INDUSTRIES CO.LID	21,225			
MATHOMAL TEXTILE & PLASTICS IND. CO	31,227			
JOHDAN MEN CARLE COMPANY	40,202			
MATTOWAL MULTIPLE 1900STRIES	34,802			
el-lai ready whar manufacturing co.	34,632			
INTERNATIONAL MORACCO & CICAMETTES	610,034			
UNIVERSAL METAL IND.	5,697			
BULLONY ENGINEERING INDUSTRIES	289,263			
CALCOR CHEMICAL & ARCYLINGIE OIL IMPORTAL	23,537	2.760	2.790	2.780
GRAND TOTAL	. 2,106,535	<u> </u>		

Jordan Times Financial Markets



Currency	IMTH	3 MIHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.87	6.15	6.62	7.18
Sterling Pound	6.00	6.16	6.75	7.25
Deutsche Mark	5_37	5.37	5.43	5.75
Swiss Franc	5.18	4.06	4.31	4.62
French Franc	5.62	6.00	6.31	6.75
Japanese Yen	2,18	2.25	2.31	2.45
European Currency Unit	6.12	6.25	6.62	7.06

Precions J	recions Metals Date: 15/12/199				
Metal	USD:Oz	JD/Gm ·	Metai	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gald	580.00	7.55	Silver	4.79	0.115
21 A-24					

Date: [5:12/1494			
Bid	Offer		
0.7020	0.7040		
1.0451	1.1006_		
0.4463	0.4485		
0.5285	0.5311		
0.1295	0.1301		
0.6995	0.7030		
0.3986	0.4006		
944444	*****		
0.0429	0.0431		
*****	*****		
	Bid 0.7020 1.0451 0.4463 0.5285 0.1295 0.6995 0.3986		

Other Currencies	Date: 15/12/1994			
('urrenc)	Bid	Offer		
Bahraini Disar	1.8460	1.8020		
Lebanese Lira	0.041225	0.042585		
Saudi Rival	0.1860	1,879		
Kuwaiti Dipar	2.3030	2.3600		
Qatari Riyal	0.1916	0.1929		
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	Q.2750		
()mant Riyal	1.80e0	1.8240		
UAF Dirham	0.1905	0.1915		
Greek Drachma	0.2840	0.3195		
Cypriot Pound	1.4030	1.5315		





Industry battle looms as new movie compact disc is unveiled

TOKYO (R) — Japan's Sony Corp and Philips Electronics N.V. of the Netherlands unveiled a blueprint Friday for a new generation of movie compact discs (CD) that they hope will make the home

video tape obsolete. With their joint design for a digital video disc (DVD) storing up to 135 minutes of film, the two companies fired the first shot in a battle with a rival electronics alliance to set the industry standard for

the new technology.

The rival group led by
Toshiba Corp. and laser disc
supremo Pioneer Electronics Corp. is working on a disc they claim offers superior picture quality and has the support of Hollywood.

If the two rival groups fail to reach agreement, discs made for one system will not play on the other, confusing consumers and restricting their choice of movies and other software.

The Sony-Philips disc, due to launched sometime in 1996, will be almost identical to a musc CD but new laser technology allows it to store five times as much data - 3.7 gigabytes (billion bytes).

It also uses special chips to squash 135 minutes of video into this amount of storage

bullion markets Friday.

One sterling

U.S. \$1.00 costs 1.3862/72

One ounce of gold \$379.80/380.10

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and

1.5716/26

1.7596/06

1.3290/00

32.31/35

5.41*27*/77

1632.2/3.2

100.25/35

7.5250/50

6.8510/60

6.1568/18

\$1.5624/34

Toshiba's version fits the same length of video onto a 4.8-gigabyte disc, meaning the simplification of images that occurs in compression is less drastic and the picture quality is better preserved.

The move industry, eager to keep its works in good condition, wants the discs to have a capacity of at least 4.5 gigabytes and has given Toshiba's proposed system the seal of approval, said Tetsuo Kodoya, a spokesman

for that company.
"This machine will be driven by software, not hardware," he said. "The most important people are Hollywood and consumers, and what they want is high quality pictures and sound.

Sony says its disc will be cheaper to manufacture because it can be made with little adjustment to music CD facilities.

"From the cost point of view Sony's version is good," said Yoshiharu Izumi, an analyst at UBS Securities' Tokyo office. "But picture quality is essential to replace the video tape and from this angle Toshiba's is better."

Both formats will eventually be able to double their capacity. Sony's will have two

Canadian dollar

Deutschemarks

Dutch guilders

Belgian francs

French francs

Japanese yen

Swedish crowns

Norwegian crowns

Italian lire

Swiss francs

separate layers of encoded surface and the laser pick-up will be able to focus on either. Toshiba's will be double-sided like an LP record.

For Sony, this is eerily re miniscent of a similar battle it fought — and lost — over video tape standards.

Its beta tapes were ousted by Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. Ltd's VHS. which became the de facto world standard, so that people who bought its beta machines now find it nearly impossible be rent video tapes for them.

This time, however, Sony is not making the mistake it made then of trying to monopolise the market. Instead it is trying to get its standard adopted by as many companies as possible. Indeed, the powerful

alliance with Philips, the world's second largest consumer electronics maker, may help it triumph.

Analysts say the outcome depends ultimately on the industry's largest player — Sony's old rival Matsushita.

If it joins Sony-Philips, their system is likely to win. If it opts for Toshiba's camp, the industry could be stuck with a damaging battle between two rival standards.

Following Sony's announcement Friday. Matsushita issued a statement saying it was still considering what to do. However it also said it thought the standard should be unified, possibly indicating it was leaning towards Sony.

"We understand we have the support of Matsushita," Sony spokesman Andrew House told Reuters.

Jordan Times Tel: 667171

Jordan awards mandate for \$50m Eurobond

By Suleiman Al Khalidi

AMMAN — Jordan has awarded the mandate for a \$50 million Eurobond, its first foray to tap funds from world capital markets since 1988, a senior central bank official has said.

"The mandate has been set... and there has been a tremendous interest in the market in this issue. This is proof that Jordan is creditworthy," Michel Marto, deputy governor of Central Bank of Jordan, told Reu-

Dr. Marto said an announcement on details of the award, to be approved by Jordan's cabinet, was expected soon.
The central bank official

did not disclose to whom it was awarded but bankers said British-based ANZ and French Paribas who bid together won the mandate to underwrite the issue.

The issuer of the seven year paper is the state-owned Telecommunications Cor-

poration, (TCC), the country's highest revenue generating public enterprise.

TCC, which maintains a monopoly over telecom-

munications in Jordan, is expected to make an operating profit of 120 million dinars (\$171.4 million) this year, compared to around 100 million dinars (\$142 million) last The issue comes in the

wake of new investor interest in Jordan after it signed a peace deal with Israel on Oct. 26 ending a 46-year state of war.

Dr. Marto confirmed the World Bank only guaranteed the issue's principal while the borrower, TCC, would back its interest.

The European issue, with

fewer strings attached com-pared to official loans, would

be cheaper than what Jordan

would get if it went directly as

sovereign borrower. "We chose what was the best offer made to Jordan," Dr. Marto said, adding that nine banks singly or together bid with five shortlisted.

Dr. Marto said interest enerated by the issue from international capital markets to finance Jordan's investment projects was an indication its country risk was

'going down.' He cited foreign confi-dence in Jordan's moves to restructure IMF directed economic adjustment plans and a sound macroeconomic

policy."
Bankers say its success will help boost foreign confidence in Jordan, open doors for cheaper financing in the future and improve its moderately high country risk and credit rating.

"We expect other issues will follow to raise the funds needed for privatisation of the state airline, electricity and water authorities," said senior banker Mifleh Agel.

The issue will partly fi-nance TCC's \$220 million investment programme to add 280,000 new telephone lines to the country's severely-strained national network by TCC is a strong candidate

to become Jordan's first privatised firm.

So far Jordan is moving at snail's pace in privatising its holdings in major corporations, an important component of IMF-directed economic plans being implemented

JORDAN MARKET PLACE



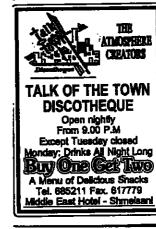
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7:00 — midnight Tel.: 638968



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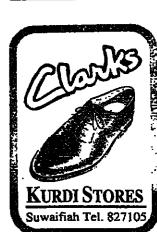
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(動養星明)









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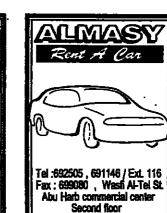
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Ahli thrash Orthodoxi to retain 3rd consecutive title

By Aleen Bannayan Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN - Al Ahli were Thursday crowned Jordan's basketball champions for the record 22nd time when they retained their third consecutive basketball title by scoring a convincing 82-65 win over Al Orthodoxi in the final match of the First Division Cham-

While Al Ahli mainly depended on their veteran players, an abundant lineup of younger teammates were more than ready to represent their team. That however was not the case with the former champions whose undermanned team was heavily exposed. Leading scorer Hilal Barakat was closely guarded by his opponents and his teammates were unable to fill the gap; their scoring was limited and consequently settled for second place af-ter allowing Al Ahli to set the pace in the match attended by over 2,000 fans

at Amman's Sports Palace. Al Ahli had won the first round encounter 79-70, and needed to repeat their win to retain their title. Al Orthodoxi could have prolonged the competition had they won the match to force a title-deciding best of three rounds.

However, Al Orthodoxi's form Thursday was not reminiscent of the years

undisputed reign on the Kingdom's basketball scene, from 1976-1989, before losing the crown to Al

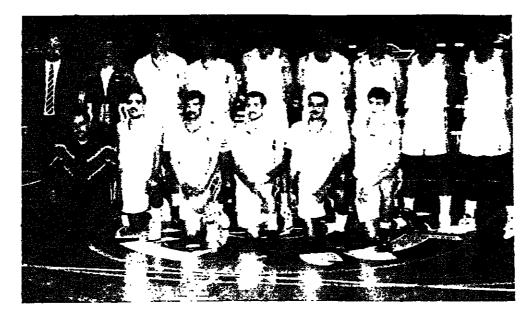
Al Orthodoxi's only lead was at 10-9 after a threepointer by Hilal Barakat in the sixth minute.

From that minute. Ramez Hammoudeh played one of his best matches and scored with Naser Bushnaq and Yousef Zaghloul to give his team a 25-19 lead before a three-pointer by Marwan Ma'touq put their lead at 28-21.

Bushnaq was substituted by Marwan Al Saeedi who closely guarded Barakat. Jan Sahlieh scored a threepointer and netted another basket for Al Orthodoxi to reduce the gap to 34-30. Al Ahli ended the first half 40-34.

Al Ahli's captain Samir Murqus, who has hinted that this season might be his last, netted a three pointer as did Sami Saduldin, both scoring 10 consecutive points, including a spectacular reverse layup by the agile Saduldin at the beginning of the second half, to give their team a 53-38 lead.

Muntaser Abul Tayyeb, who has not appeared in his usual form, answered back with a three-pointer of his own but later gained his fourth personal foul which greatly hampered his de-



Al Ahli's team

Ahli

Orthodoxi

Jazireh

Watani

Hussein 2

Homentmen

fensive capability. Another three-pointer by Ma'touq gave Al Ahli a 60-44 lead as the titleholders took an irreversible lead and seemed set to win

FINAL STANDINGS

3

12

* Relegated to 2nd division.

Al Ahli's Mohammad Al Shamali, who was not given much playing time this season, netted six consecutive points, as did Al Orthodoxi's brilliant playmaker Jihad Saliba who cleverly

SF SA Pts.

723

813

815

1083

1045 15

1020 10

18

1238 670

1140

928

707 815

759

508

12

penetrated Al Ahli's defences based on individual skills rather than a preset playing strategy or teamwork effort.

Al Ahli led 68-51 before Barakat and Saliba added seven points and tried to apply a press defence which was easily countered by Al Ahli's faster players.

Al Ahli's Zaghloul. Bushnaq, and Murqus outscored their opponents 6-1 in two minutes and Hammoudeh captivated fans with the match's sole slam dank to lead 78-61 and seal the match with an \$2-65

third place for a third consecutive year after defeating former third place holders Al Jalil 73-69 and 71-55. Al Jalil thus finished

Al Jazireh's retained

"Although we retained our standing, we were a much better team this year," Jazireh's head coach Imad Al Sa'eed told the Jordan Times.

Al Jazireh young lineup represents the club's under-22 team. They are credited with the honour of being the only team to defeat Al Ahli in a halftime score at 42-32 in their mere 12-point 77-65 defeat to the titlehol-

"Our players greatly benefitted from their matches against more experienced players. I expect them to perform much better in upcoming seasons, Saeed added.

Al Watani maintained their place in the division on score difference with Al Hussein. Al Hussein had won their first round encounter 79-76. However. Al Watani won the second round match \$4-68 and pushed Al Hussein to 2nd division for the first time since they were promoted

Undermanned Homentmen, who have been struggling for the past decade for a foothold in the prestigious group returned to the second division.

Weary U.S. fans wary of baseball reprieve

WASHINGTON (AFP) -Major League club owners granted baseball a seven-day grace period, but it remains to be seen if the pre-Christmas reprieve will be enough to salvage the 1995

Strike weary fans are still skeptical, believing the machinations of both players and owners betray a lack of concern for a game that has been a source of joy to Americans for 125 years.

"Players have lost touch with the real world and the owners never cared about the fans," said long-time fan Mike Devine of Portland. Oregon, "This is all about money and power.

"I am not willing to ignore game I grew up with. But what I won't do is attend a game for a while. It's the only power we have as fans," he

On Thursday, owners voted to postpone implementation of a salary cap for seven days, saying they hoped to reach an agreement with striking players, and get the 1995 season back on

track. But owners still say they need salary limits, and players are still viscerally opposed

If an extra weeks of talks yields no progress, owners say they will impose the cap. and players say they will take the matter to court in what would be a long, bitter legal

Players would appeal to the National Labour Relations Board (NLRB), charging owners with failure to bargain in good faith. They would seek a legal injunction against the salary cap during a two-month NLRB invesA hearing before an admi-nistrative law judge could come in March, around the time players would be expected to report for spring training before the 1995 season. Few are expected to cross picket lines if a salary cap is in place

Players went on strike on August 12, wiping out the last 52 days of the season and forcing the cancellation of the World Series for the first time since 1904.

The shut-down and four months of tailed talks have made baseball fans broser. Sales of souvenir clothing are down 50 per cent.

Stock values on baseball card manufacturers have plunged as the public has quit purchasing collectibles. Offrial 1994 World Senes baseballs, never used, are being offered at bargain prices, i with few takers."

"Everybody is fed up with all the greed," said Frank Sullivan, a Cleveland Indians' season ticket holder who founded a fans' protest group "What they all forget is that the buck stop with the

Baseball, which once enjoyed near-mythical status as 🤻 was handed down from parents to children, has become a disappointment to many of those who loved the game most.

"it's difficult to measure the damage, but it will be harmful," said Boston Red Sox owner John Harrington, the owners' top negotiator.

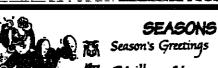
An epic legal light is still possible before lawyers and judges do what millionaire owners and players could not find a formula to divide the spoils in what had been a billion-dollar per year indus-

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Ondieki refuses to run against Chinese

SYDNEY (AFP) - Australia's star long distance runner Lisa Ondieki has threatened to poycott next year's world athlenes championships in Sweden if Chinese athletes Ondicki qualified for the

Gothenburg event with an

outstanding win in the Australian 10,000 metres championship in Melbourne on Thursday night. She then expressed deep reservations about the all-conquering Chinese women. "I would not waste my

time by going to compete against women running junior men's times," said Ondieki, who less than a month ago finished third in the Tokyo Marathon.

"It's a joke that a woman can run 29m30s for the 10,000m. If they get rid of them (the Chinese) it would be okay, otherwise it would be a waste of time."

GOREN BRIDGE

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Defense is the most difficult facet
of bridge. Each defender sees only
half of the defense's total assets, so
methods a defender can do to make

anything a defender can do to make partner's lot easier should be seized when the opportunity arises. This deal was originally reported by Dr. George Rosenkring of Mexico City.

North a ump to three spairs was, by agreement, involutional showing in the most and tour card support South had no interest beyond game, Noted hair to interest responsing anneal. Mest led the new of hearts then aband to a low clob Since that industed in homor in the said. East inverted the lack and when that wen continued with the gay of the said. On these two tracks declared made out the metric and ten-of-clob produced the eight and ten of clides had West followed reatmess with the six of chibs on the second r and East would have been faced with an involuble problem. Was declared take carding with a third club, in take carding with a finite dub, in which case the defenders had to cash another club, or had West started with four clubs, in which case it would be correct to revert to

East might still have been safting there trying to find a solution had it not been for the fact West was a cooperative partner. On the new of clubs West jettisoned the king! With the club suit now useless. First had no difficulty reverting to hearts and

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Invitation For Bids Mafraq Water System Rehabilitation Project Contracts Central No. 161/94

1. The Water Authority of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, through the Ministry of Public Works and Housing/Government Tenders Directorate, invites experienced foreign contractors from countries which meet the eligibility criteria of the European Investment Bank and local contractors who have been prequalified by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing as First Grade in Water and Sewerage, or a joint venture between eligible foreign and local contractors to submit their offers for the supply, delivery and construc-tion of Mafraq Water Distribution System. Foreign contractors are strongly encouraged to joint venture or associate with the above graded local contractors.

2. The project is partially financed by (EIB).

3. The project consists of the supply and installation of water supply pipes with diameter varying from 19mm to 400mm, total length about 181 km.

4. Tender documents are available and may be examined and purchased the Government Tenders Directorate at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing in Amman: P.O.Box 1220 Tel. (+) 962 6 607 481, Fax (+) 962 6 606 751.

5. The non-refundable fee for each set of tender documents will be JD 500.

6. The latest date set for the purchase of tender documents by the eligible bidders is January 23rd, 1995.

7. A prebid conference will be held at the Water Authority's main offices in Amman at 900 hour. Jordan local time, on Monday 23rd January 1995 8. Bids are due not later than 1200 hours, Jordan

Local Time, on Saturday, February 4th, 1995, to the office of the Government Tenders Directorate

Eng. George Haddad Chairman/Central Tenders Committee General Director/Government Tenders all reprieve

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Sports



Wale's Vinnie Jones centre seems to have a dance with his Bulgarian opponent during their European qualifying match.
Bulgaria won 3-0 (AFP photo)

the first and the beng The service of the second of the Germany take on of the creek and Franchischer as the control of the Suffix and the Albania on home turf founded time protection Street West they all forgets that the banks stop with the

BONN (R) — Germany plan to continue where they left off against Moldova in midthe war harden down har Championship qualifier in Kaiserslautern Sunday.

Coach Berti Vogts is hoping his frontline trio of veteran Lothar Matthaeus and strikers Ulf Kirsten and Juergen Klinsmann can repeat the impact they made on Wednesday when Germany's 3-0 win maintained their 100 per cent record in group

Kirsten scored the first goal and set up Klinsmann for the second, while Matthaens, playing in defence but going forward at every opportunity, hit the third.

Borrussia Dortmund striker Karlheinz Riedle, who missed the Moldova match, is suffereing from a pulled shin muscle but is likely to be named as one of the substi-

Vogts told Germany's Bild newspaper the Moldova win showed the German team was back in form and recovering morale lost when it was dumped out of the World Cup finals by Bulgaria.

"I'm looking forward to it," he said. "We just have to pick up where we left off in

Vogts is expected to name an unchanged line-up, but would not rule out possibility of bringing in local hero Stefan Kuntz if the K+ and K+ formula, as Klinsmann and Kirsten have been dubbed by the German press, proves to be a one-off.

Juventus defender Juergen Kohler is again likely to be missing Sunday. He is suffering from a painful right achilles tendon and Bayern Munich's Thomas Helmer is expected to retain his place.

Despite doomsayers, tennis is alive and well

The Associated Press

TENNIS DIDN'T DIE in 1994 after all, confounding the doomsayers ready to bury

The sport, in fact, looked more fobust than it had in years, with record attendance and prizes, burgeoning rivalries, and promising new faces even as it witnessed an emotional farewell by Martina Navratilova, the most successful women's player in his-

Pete Sampras and Steffi Graf repeated as the No. 1 players, but each felt pressure mounting as the year wore on. Injuries took a toll on both, and they saw long-time rivals, Andre Agassi and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, lift their own games for runs at the top spots in 1995.

Sampras played sublime tennis most of the year, capturing the Australian Open and Wimbledon to raise his total of Grand Slam titles to five by age 23. Samrpas won eight other tournaments, including the ATP Tour World Championship, and wound up with a record \$3.6 million in official prize money, plus \$1.2 million in bonus prizes. boosting his career earnings

to more than \$16 million.

But a foot injury suffered in a Davis Cup match right after Wimbledon sidelined Sampras for the next six weeks until the start of the U.S. Open. Sampras literally staggered out of exhaustion after losing in five sets to Jaime Yzaga, and that opened the way for Agassi.

Agassi, who drifted down to No. 24 in the rankings at

the end of last year, entered

the U.S. Open unseeded, But he came in fitter and sharper than he'd been since winning his only other Grand Slam title, Wimbledon in 1992. Under the tutelage of savvy fellow player Brad Gilbert, Agassi also suddenly played smarter and more consistent tennis. It all resulted in a stunning romp to the championship that included a record five victories over seeded players.

Agassi went on to rocket to No. 2 in the rankings with five titles, the best of his chareer, and is in position to overtake Sampras for the top spot as early as next April. Boris Becker didn't win

any major titles, but he played well enough to rise to No. 3 at year's end, followed by Sergi Bruguera, who won his second straight French Open. A week after the U.S.

Open, the tennis world was shocked by the accidental death of 40-year-old Vitas Gerulaitis from a faulty heating system's gas leak at the hoime of a friend in the New York city suburbs. The gregarious Gerulaitis, once one of the game's best players, had become an insightful and humorous tennis announcer. His popularity spanned generations, from former coach and U.S. Open Champion Fred Stolle to John McEnroe, Jimmy Connors, Bjorn Borg and Guil-lermo Vilas, to young players like Sampras. Gerulaitis and Sampras played golf together just a few days before the tragedy.
In women's tennis, the

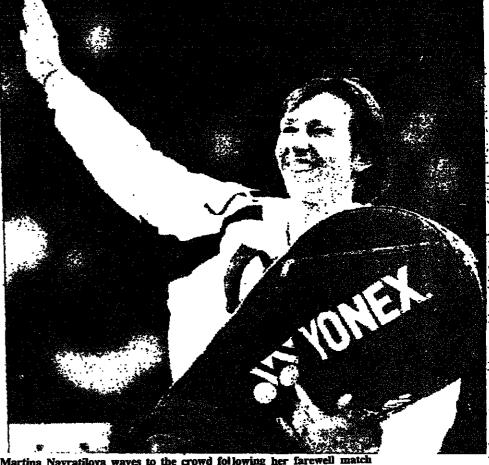
sport thrived on Arantxa Sanchez Vicario's blossoming rivalry with Graf, who started the year by winning the Australian Open for her 15th Grand Slam title and ended it struggling with chronic back

Sanchez Vicario, becoming obsessed with reaching No. 1 at last, sought out the help of a sports psychologist, a nutri-tionist and a new trainer, and went on to win the French and U.S. Opens - the latter with a dramatic three-set triumph over Graf in the finals.

Sanchez Vicario finished the year with \$2.9 million in prize money, more than double the amount Graf won. Sanchez Vicario also accumulated 5,299 points in the rankings to Graf's 4,592, but Graf had on to the No. 1 ranking with a slightly higher point average per tournament. Sanchez Vicario's Spanish

compatriot, Conchita Mar-tinez, won Wimbledon for her first Grand Slam title, beating no less than Navratilova, the nine-time cham-

Simply reaching the final at



dropped off the tour the U.S.

Open in 1993 to return to

high school, resurfaced under

unfortunate circumstances in

the spring when she was

arrested at a Florida motel

for marijuana possession.

Capriati, 18, checked into a

drug rehabilitation clinic,

then moved with her family

Martina Navratilova waves to the crowd following her farewell

age 37 was an astounding achievement for Navratilova, justifying her decision to play one more year. With the silver runner-up plate looking so small in her hand, she stooped to pluck one last tiny patch of grass from Centre Court as a souvenir before

leaving to a warm ovation. Navratilova skipped the U.S. Open and retired at the Virginia Slims Championships in New York after losing in the first round to eventual winner Gabriela Sabatini, who captured her first title since the Italian Open in 1992. to California to seek a fresh The sport continued to start. She played one match miss the presence of Monica in November, losing to Anke Seles, the former No. 1 who Huber in Philadelphia, but has been out since she was planned to play a dozen stabbed in the back in Gertournaments in 1995, starting many on April 30, 1993. with the Australian Open. Jennifer Capriati, who

Two very promising 14year-olds entered the pro ranks late in the year, Martina Hingis of Switzerland and Venus Williams, an American whose family moved from California cross-country to Florida to enroll her and 13-year-old sister Serena in Rick Macci's Tennis

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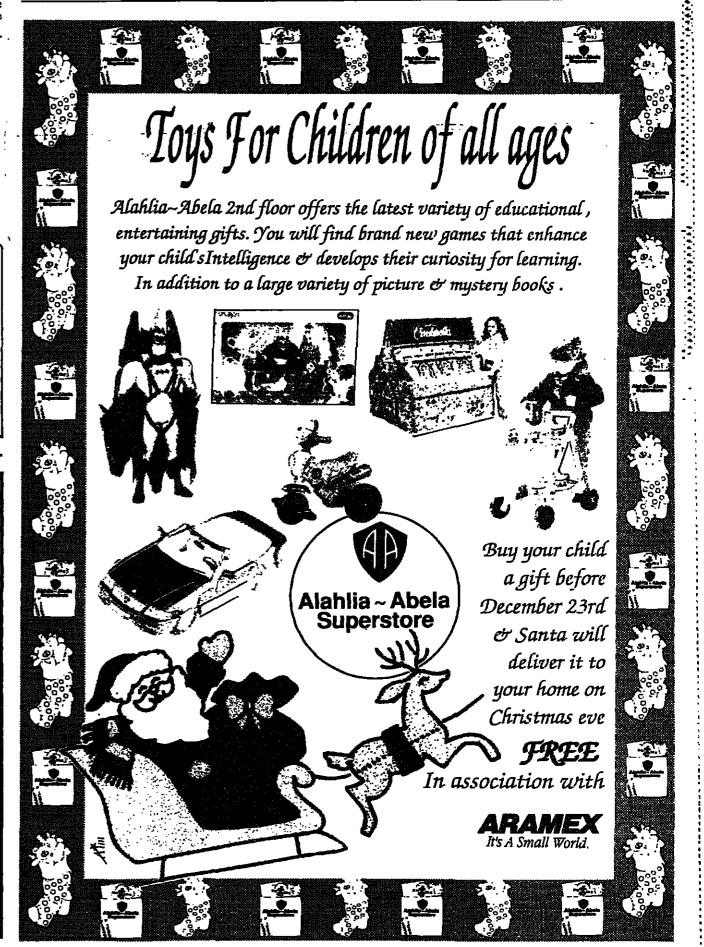
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Dudayev agrees to talk, demands Russian pullout

GROZNY (Agencies) — Separatist Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev accepted Russia's offer of peace negotiations Friday, but added an almost impossible condition - that Russian troops be-

sieging the capital pull out. In his three-point statement, Dudayev called for "an immediate cessation of hostilities," six days after Russian forces rolled into the tiny Muslim Caucasus republic to crush its three-year-old secessionist bid.

 "All military forces must leave Chechen territory, after which we must rapidly begin talks at the highest level," Mr. Dudayev said in the written statement issued in the capital Grozny.

The condition was unlikely to be accepted by President Boris Yeltsin, who has staked much on forcing the republic to recognise itself as part of the Russian Federation.

Two of Yeltsin's aides told reporters in Moscow that he was likely to order a siege of Grozny and to clamp direct rule from Moscow on the rest of the republic.

Earlier Mr. Dudayev ordered his forces to pull back and avoid clashes with the estimated 25,000 to 40,000 Russian troops which have been involved in bitter clashes with separatist Chechen forces.

The mixed signals followed Yeltsin's offer late Thursday

Russian troops and tanks assault on the city of about 400,000.

The president of Russia's Federation Council, the parliament's upper chamber, Friday called for a ceasefire in Chechenva as of 3:00 p.m. (1200 GMT) in a bid to ease the stand-off. There was only sporadic fighting in the afternoon.

Viktor Chernomyrdin reneated the offer of holding talks

BRUSSELS (R) — Turkey's

chances of sealing a customs union with the European

Union (EU) next week have

foundered on Greek objec-

tions and rising European an-

ger over the jailing of Kur-dish parliamentarians.

- EU officials say a meeting

scheduled for Monday be-

tween EU foreign ministers and Turkish officials is not

expected to result in any con-

crete progress on the pact

and may not even take place.

will go away empty-handed

having heard about human

rights," one EU diplomat

like (the meeting) to be can-

celled," he added, noting

some previous meetings had

Even if the meeting does

take place, it will be held

following a barrage of com-

plaints by European leaders

about Turkey's human right

record, notably the jailing of

the Kurdish parliamenta-

(Continued from page 1)

al. These meetings, Dr. Ma-

jali said, were good indicta-

tions that there was less ten-

sion between Jordan and the

visit to Jordan, the Prime

Minister said there was no-

Asked to name the parties

responsible for obstructing

the mention of Jordan's role

in the resolutions, the prime

minister said he could not

accuse any party. He said,

though, that the resolutions

were normally worked out by

the conference's general sec-

retriat and a preparatory

committee comprising fore-

left Morocco before the sum-

mit ended on Thursday, the

prime minister said that since

the conference was only sche-

duled for Tuesday and

Wednesday there was no

Asked why the King had

ign ministers.

thing new in this regard.

Asked about Mr. Arafat's

Gulf countries.

Majali: Jordan will

continue custodianship

been scratched.

"The Greeks would clearly

"If the (Turks) come, they

away republic but warned of tough military action if they refused to negotiate.

He said he doubted Dudayev was ready to "begin real negotiations," and suggested the Chechen leader was only saying he was prepared to talk to win time.

Dudayev repeated his frequent warnings that Russia was playing with fire and risked provoking the turbulent Caucasus region into an uprising. "War in the Caucasus would involve a number of countries in the region and could spread much further." he said.

Several western media organisations, who received warnings from Russian military sources saying that journalists would be a target in the event of an offensive on the Chechenya capital, said they would withdraw photographers from Grozny Satur-

Russian authorities in Moscow warned journalists they were staying in Grozny at their own risk and refused to deliver fresh accreditations.

Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev meanwhile called off a planned visit to Hungary next week, although no reason was given, Hungarian authorities said.

The Russian parliament has roundly criticised the intervention, but failed to suggest an alternative.

Yeltsin is considering ordering a total blockade of Grozny and imposing Russian rule on the rest of the territory while negotiations are underway, said two top Yeltsin aides at a press conference in Moscow.

A senior member of the defence commission in the Russian parliament said it would be impossible to sustain a prolonged military presence in Chechenya because of a shortage of money and the crisis condition of the Russia's armed forces.

Moscow has been on a heightened security alert since the crisis began. On Friday, the wife of U.S. Vice President Al Gore, who was visiting Moscow, had to cancel a school visit after a telephoned bomb threat.

they hope for as little bloodshed as possible, but that the

Greece, human rights

derail EU-Turkey pact

They were jailed last week

for alleged support of the

outlawed Kurdistan Workers'

Party (PKK), which has

waged a 10-year battle for

control of the largely Kurdish

been negotiating an agree-ment that would bring Tur-

key closer to the EU than any

The EU and Turkey have

southeast

Mr. Gore said in Moscow after brief talks with Yeltsin: "We are following events in Chechenya. It is an internal Russian affair. We hope that it can be resolved through negotiations. It is an internal Russian affair.'

But Estonian Foreign Minister Juri Luik slammed the operation, saying it could "affect the inner stability of Russia, and that will always cause problems for the neighbouring countries."
Saudi Arabia has also criti-

cised the intervention in mostly Muslim Chechenya.

In Moscow Mr. Yeltsin escalated his criticism of Chechenya Friday, calling the rebel republic a "sinister" hotbed of crime that threatens Russia and the world at large.
"Chechenya is a powerful

crime-breeding zone from where criminal elements operate throughout the coun-" said a statement issued by Mr. Yeltsin's office. Mr. Yeltsin is in a Moscow hospital, recuperating from nose

One of the main reasons that forced the dispatch of troops to the Chechen Republic is the fact that (it) has turned in recent years into one of the most sinister centres not only of Russian, but also of world crime," Mr. Yeltsin's office said.

An estimated 10,000 to 40,000 Russian soldiers, supported by tanks, warplanes and helicopter gunships, rol-led into Chechenya on Sun-

The region of 1.2 million people, located 1,600 kilometres southeast of Moscow, declared independence in 1991, but Russia has refused to recognise its claim.

The statement issued by Mr. Yeltsin sought to rally public opinion, which has so far largely opposed military intervention in Chechenya.

Mr. Yeltsin's office also issued a memo by the interior ministry, which said ethnic Chechens were behind most heinous crimes in recent years. It also said Chechenya sheltered wanted criminals. A total of 1,201 suspected

echen criminals were wanted by Russian police, the ministry said.

(\$720 million) financial package due from the EU since

of Turkey, has said it cannot

agree the customs union

while Turkish troops are still

on the divided island of Cyp-

Athens, a long-time rival



puts the finishing touches to an ice carving of the Sydney Opera House at The Frozen City exhibition in Sydney Friday. Created by 35 ice carvers from the city of Harbin in largest refrigerator (AFP photo)

threaten Israelis

ramme with new reactors

which produce far less

The United Nation's nuc-

lear watchdog agency, the International Atomic Energy

Agency (IAEA), says North

Korea has abided by its

pledge to freeze its nuclear

programme under the agree-

But the United States in-

sists North Korea must aban-

don missile exports and sup-

part for international terror-

ism before normal relations

can be established between

the two countries, something

the North desperately seeks.

Mr. Rabin told a news con-

ference Thursday the North

had already supplied Iran and

Syna with Scud missiles cap-

able of travelling 500 km and

And he said that at least

one of the countries had be-

gun producing its own laun-

chers using means supplied

noted the long-range missiles

under development in the

North, the 1,300-km range

Rodongs, are too inaccurate

"Their purpose is to use

them against centres of

population for the killing of

innocent population of

Israel," he said, "as it hap-pened during the Gulf crisis

when Iraq used the Scud mis-

siles only against the civilian

This means North Korea

supplied Iran and Syria

weapons against the Israeli

civilian population."
Mr. Rabin said negotia-

tions with Syria were compli-

cated because Syria, unlike

other Arab states that have

already reached peace agree-

ments with his country, re-

fused to meet Israeli nego-

tiators face-to-face.

to hit military targets.

The Israeli prime minister

the launchers for them.

by Pyengyang.

population.

weapons-grade plutonium.

SEOUL (R) - Israeli Prime Korea's suspect nuclear prog-Minister Yitzhak Rabin Friday said long-range Scud missiles being developed in North Korea with Iranian money were a particular threat to Israeli civilians and to an overall Middle East

Mr. Rabin, who had an unscheduled breakfast meeting with South Korean President Kim Young-Sam, told a news conference North Korea had already supplied Syria and Iran with shorterrange Scud C missiles, launchers and the technology to produce them.

"In addition," He said. Iran spends hundreds of millions of dollars in North Korea for the development of longer-range ground-toground missiles, the kind of missiles that can be launched from Iran to reach targets in

"It might be that North Korea is also involved in proliferation of mass destruction weapons to others." Mr. Rabin said on the penultimate day of a four-day visit to South Korea, the first by an Israeli prime minister.

"We see this act of North Korea as endangering the peace in the Middle East," he said, adding: "I hope the international community will be able to cope with these dangerous

acts of North Korea." The United States and other Western countries suspect North Korea used its atomic energy programme to develop nuclear arms, something Pyongyang denies. Western intelligence agencies also believe the secretive Stalinist north has a large stockpile of chemical and biological weapons.

In October, Washington and Pyongyang reached an agreement to replace North

Rabin: Iranian Scuds | Gulf foreign ministers to draft summit agenda The ministers will also dis-

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AFP) — Foreign ministers from six Gulf states are to draw up an agenda in Bahrain on Saturday ahead of a summit.

The 15th summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is due to open in Manama Monday.

Foreign minsters meeting Saturday "will look at a large range of questions concern-ing the Middle East peace process, Arab-Israeli relations, the situation in the Gulf after Iraq's recognition of Kuwait and the links between the GCC countries." said a council spokesman.

The GCC countries -Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain - decided in September to ease their boycott imposed on Israel since 1948.

attacks on its territory. After their talks, the foreign ministers will pass on their perceptions and recommendations" to their

cuss ways of boosting their

joint force the Peninsula

Shield based in Saudi Arabia.

force from the current 4,000

in 1984 proved incapable of

driving back Iraqi forces when they invaded Kuwait in

also signed a joint security accord, but Kuwait has re-

fused to initial it until it has

been approved by purlia-

ment, And Qatar boycotted a

meeting of interior ministers

in Riyadh to protest Saudi

troops to 25,000 men.

August 1990.

They want to increase the

The symbolic force created

Four of the six states have

heads of state, the GCC sec-Majali dissolves Al And central council,

By Khalil Abdul Salam dom. Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN (J.T.) - The chief of Al Ahd Party, Abdul Hadi Majali, Friday belittled the importance of news reports of mass resignations from his party ranks. He charged that most of the names carried by the local press were fake and have no relation whatsoever to his party.

Speaking at a press conference here, Mr. Majali accused what he called "elements inside and outside the party" of conspiring to des-troy what he called the "party's strong base at the national level." He labelled those elements as "envious opportunists."

Newspapers on Thursday and Friday carried the 16 names of presumably party members from Ajloun branch, who had resigned. Mr. Majali charged that his

party's stands have prompted party enemies to accuse it of factionalism and sectarian-Answering to accusations

by outgoing members that decisions within the party were taken unilaterally and without consultation. Mr. Maiali said the party's decision to support the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty was adopted unanimously by the party's political bureau.

He said the party lead-ership had discussed the treaty with the cadres in the various parts of the King-

freezes membership Mr. Majali said that the centrist party was reco ing party membership after it had established that the number of party members was never indicative of the party's strength. He noted that the party had made a mistake by accepting more members in order to increase the "num-

ber at the expense of quali-He said that party general elections will be held in the first quarter of 1995 to elect members to the central council. politburo and branches' leaderships. Mr. Majali announced the freezing of membership and the dissolution of the party's central council. On governmentparty relations, Mr. Maiali said the government is not obliged to discuss the peace treaty with the parties. Parties should only be able to discuss the treaty through their representatives in the

Lower House of Parliament. Mr. Majali said he saw no Jordanian-Palestinian differences over the issue of Jerusalem. He stressed that Jordan had always sought to reaffirm the Palestinian identity of Jerusalem. However, he said, the Palestinian leadership did not have an unanimous agreement on this. He noted that "certain Arab countries are searching for a role to play in the future, and that is why they are now rai-ing this issue and trying to marginalise Jordan's role."

Lung cancer danger 'stays with ex-smokers

LONDON (R) - Prople who gave up smoking years ago could remain eight times more likely to develop lung cancer than people who never smoked, according to research published Wednesday. Dr. Mohammad Munavvar from the British Thoracis Society (BTS) said it was previously thought that a smoker who had given up for 10 years faced the same risk of lung cancer as a non-smoker. That is clearly disproved here," he told Reuters. "Even after 20 years, the risk is higher in an ex-smoker than in a non-smoker, but much, much lower than that in current smokers." Doctors at Hope Hospital in Salford, northwestern England, looked at the smoking history of 274 patients found to have a visible tumour in the central airways of the lungs. Fiftyfive per cent of these cancer cases were current digarette smokers, 38 per cent were ex-smokers and only two per & cent were non-smokers. Of the ex-smokers, 12 per cent had given up at least 10 years ago. "Smokers should not kid themselves that it is OK to carry on smoking until they're 30 or 40-something and then quit," said Dr. Ronan O'Driscoll, also from the BTS, "The risk never goes away completely." "Our message is prevention is better than cure. We must stop the tobacco industry enticing our children to start smoking in the first place," he added,

Peru's estranged first couple to call it quits

LIMA (AFP) - After a pub-

lie falling-out with all the rollercoaster drama of a soap opera, Susana Higuchi de Fuilmori has announced she was filing for divorce from President Alberto Fujimori. "Yes. it's true." Mrs. Higuchi told local reporters when asked about rumours she would seek a civil divorce after earher maintaining she would not because she is a practicing Roman Catholic. Mrs. Higuchi, whom the president stripped of her ceremonial role as first lady earlier in the vear, also said she would ask the Vatican for an annul? ment of their 24-year marriage. She said her lawyers would begin proceedings simultaneously before court authorities and church officials. Mrs. Higuchi has criticised her husband's political priorities, saving he was not making poverty a big enough issue in a country in which one half the population of 22 million lives below the poverty level. The first couple's marital woes began to rock the media here Aug. 3 when Mrs. Higuchi charged that Mr. Fujimori's political allies in the legislature passed a law to bar relatives of the president from seeking public office to keep her out of the political picture. A construction engineer by training, Mrs. Higuchi later tried unsuccessfully to register to run for president in the April 1995 election against her husband. She then fired back by making specific corruption allegations about government ministers and presidential advisers, which prompt al Mr. Fujimori to end her ceremonial duties as first lady After announcing her divorce plans, Mrs. Higuelu reiter- (ated her charges that official corruption in Fujimori's povernment was rife.

Lottery millionaire cannot even give it away

LONDON (AFP) - A Muslim charity has retused a donation of more than £1 million (\$1.5 million) from the winner of the British National Lottery's £17.8 million jackpot, said Friday's Daily Mail. Close friends of the winner said he had decided to give at least £1 milhon to the Islamic Relief Charity and £200,000 (\$300,000) for the building of a community centre next to the Masjid Al Momineen Mosque in Blackburn, northern England, where he lives, said the paper. But Islamic Relief accused the 41-yearold father of three, who has not been named, of setting a bad example to Muslims by defying strictures on game'r ling in the Koran. "He has done wrong. There is no pleasure in a donation like this. We cannot accept it," fundraiser Ashfaq Burundkar was quoted as savine

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Geagea trial postponed

country outside Norway and Iceland, which are linked through the free trade European economic area. It calls for Turkey to remove external tariffs on EU goods, set its third-country tariffs at the same rate as the

EU does and accept preferential agreements with Chief Justice Philip other countries that the EU has negotiated. In exchange, Turkey would get access to the huge EU market in most sectors other than agriculture and services.

Greece, however, has blocked agreement both on the pact and on a 600 million European currency unit

need for the King to stay on after delivering his address.

In any way, the King had

a former Christian warlord in the murder of a rival politician resumed Friday but was quickly adjourned after the remaining defence lawyers withdrew for court.

Khairallah put off until Jan. 6, 1995, the trial of Samir Geagea, former commander of the Lebanese Forces Christian militia, in the murder of Dany Chamoun, his wife and two young sons in October 1990.

The postponement came after the last three lawyers defending Mr. Geagea boycotted the trial in solidar-

. Israel allows no inspec-

tions of the jail, where sus-

pected Lebanese and

Palestinian guerrillas are held. The Dabajeh family

has had no word of Kifah

for six years, Rafik said.

ity with 117 other defence attorneys who walked out of the courtroom last week. The large number of attorneys appears to be intended as a demonstration of strength.

In last week's session, the five-man judicial council rejected a defence demand to move Mr. Geagea from detention at the defence ministry prison to a civilian jail. Mr. Geagea, 43, who led

the largest Christian militia during the 1975-90 civil war until it was disarmed in 1991, has alleged mistreatment at the defence ministry facility.

His lawvers have set Mr. Geagea's removal from the defence ministry as a condition for returning to the courtroom. Mr. Geagea said he supported such a move and would not accept other lawvers to defend him.

Mr. Geagea's separate trial in the bombing of a church in February in which 11 people died and 60 were wounded was to resume as scheduled on Saturday.

It is the first trial of a senior civil war figure and underlines governments efforts to restore fully its authority over the country.

French activist to defend Israeli-held prisoners

By Haitham Haddadin

another commitment on his BEIRUT — The families schedule, and he left in order to meet that commitment. of 250 prisoners held in The Jordan News Agency a notorious Israeli-control-Petra, Friday quoted Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon led jail in South Lebanon have delegated the head of Peres as expressing Israeli France's human rights comsupport for Jordan's role in mission to seek information about them and fight for Jerusalem's holy places.

Petra said Mr. Peres had their release. "Our hopes are pinned told journalists Thursday that on vou," Kifah Dabajeh Israel's position was based on told Monique Picard Weyl, respect for the present status carrying a photograph of quo under which Jordan his brother Rafik who he plays the role of guardian of the holy places. Mr. Peres said has been held in said that Israel would not Khiam prison in Israel's change that situation, Petra occupation zone since

reported. The Agency also quoted Mr. Peres as saying that the Palestinians also have the right to keep their civil institutions in the city and that they would continue to enjoy the same right they have at

Ms. Weyl, who is on a weeklong visit to Lebanon. says she is determined to publicise the issue of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners in Khiam and of about 50 Lebanese prisoners in Israel. Relatives of the

Lebanese held in Israel said they also want her help. Some 150 mothers. fathers, sisters and brothers of prisoners - some in tears - told the French lawyer at a meeting on Thursday they wanted her to take up their cases and bring them news if she

visits Khiam and Israeli Khiam is run by the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia

but Israel, which has 1,000

troops in the 13-km wide occupation zone, has ultimate control of the jail and everything else in the zone. "Israel has forbidden us

to get any news of Rafik for six years ... every time our hopes rose in the past they were dashed again. We hope that you don't travel back home and we see our hopes dashed again." Mr. Dabajeh told Ms. Weyl.

Ms. Weyl promised to contact Israeli officials when she returned to France to get them to get her permission from SLA chief General Antoine Lahd to enter Khiam, whic she calls a Nazi-style concentration camp.

She says it is closed to outside inspection and she has been refused entry both by the SLA and the Israelis, and that according to former captives many

inmates are blind, lose limbs, ears and eyes and are sick.

A Khiam prisoner named Selim Awada died a week ago at the American University hospital in Beirut, four days after being re-leased, Ms. Weyl said. "There should be talk about the oppression befalling these detainees."

Former prisoners told her of their plight inside Khiam.

"They used to torture us with electricity, cold water. beatings with whips and by psychological means like threat of rape," Kifah Afifi, a 23-year-old Palestinian woman, said.

"There was hardly any medical treatment for the released three months ago

Ms. Afifi said she was

after six years in Khiam for taking part in a failed raid by Palestinian guerrillas in the Israeli-held zone. She said 10 women remain in Khiam.

"The suffering inside is great. No words can express it," Sahar Zayter, released two years ago, said. 'We suffered a lot and those who remain inside suffer from physical and psychological torture," Ms. Zayter added.

Mohammad Safa, head of the follow-up committee for the support of the Lebanese detainces in Israeli prisons, told the families they can fill out forms next week officially authorising Ms. Weyl to defend their sons.

The forms would be sent to Ms. Weyl in France through the Lebanese foreign ministry, Ms. Safa said.

of high-level negotiations to avert all-out war and a 48hour extension of the deadline for separatist fighters to surrender. The old deadline ran out Thursday, and has now been extended to midnight Saturday (2100 GMT). The three-column forces of have been ordered to encircle Grozny, but Chechens were preparing for a bloody all-out